# Wiki Doc BCRR Round Two

# 1NC\_KentuckyDG

## OFF

### 1NC---K

#### The US is an empire built on the twin foundations of violent coercion and forced consent---the AFF’s desire to protect the “American interest” manifests itself in endless interventions and forced liberalization to extract profits for Western corporations. Be skeptical of their evidence; their authors have a financial incentive to construct threats against imperialism.

Bhattacharya 21, Co-chair of the Political Education Committee at Central Jersey DSA and is a writer based in New Jersey, having been published in Current Affairs, Cosmonaut, New Politics, Reappropriate, and The Aerogram, among other outlets. Prior to pursuing a PhD in Political Science at Rutgers University, he had worked full-time as a reporter across the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast (Sudip, October 22nd, “The US Empire: Coercion and Consent,” *Counter Punch*, <https://www.counterpunch.org/2021/10/22/the-us-empire-coercion-and-consent/>, Accessed 11-25-2021)

THE U.S. EMPIRE: FORM & FUNCTION Contrary to the myth, which has been eroded due to pressure from activists and historians, the U.S. has always depended on modes of violence to quell certain populations, to expand from its original thirteen colonies. The violence included the murder of indigenous peoples, with the enslavement of Africans, and the repression of those who would resist against the dominant social order of private property, racialized terror, and the right for businesses to turn a profit above nearly all other demands. Historian Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz writes, The origin of the United States in settler colonialism—as an empire born from the violent acquisition of indigenous lands and the ruthless devaluation of indigenous lives—lends the country unique characteristics that matter when considering questions of how to unhitch its future from its violent DNA. To this day, particular populations in the country, African Americans who are working poor or working class, those who are trying to create a more egalitarian society, one that provides for what people need to live, immigrant workers who stand up for themselves against the tyranny of agricultural capitalists, are oftentimes suppressed through physical force. This was most evident during last year’s protests against the police, in which protestors were pushed, mauled, and attacked by law enforcement. Tear gas and Billy clubs were unleashed the moment people spilled into the streets, demanding that the social order change. When people started to attack businesses, the police responded with extreme force, willing to crack some skulls for some “peace”. As the U.S. expanded its empire overseas, violence remained a critical tool, as countries hoping to rehabilitate and create economies that European colonialists had ruined, were one-by-one occupied and coerced through other forms of U.S. force. As countries in the Third World witnessed the rise of socialists and Leftists, those who identified the need for redistribution of land and resources, and were willing to challenge the dominant role that U.S. and European companies played in their respective nations, the U.S. helped lead right-wing coups (like the one in Indonesia in which were millions were killed overnight), as well as apply other coercive tactics, such as sanctions on Cuba following their own revolution that overthrew the U.S.-supported dictator, Fulgencio Bautista, which have prevented the Cuban economy from receiving access to critical resources to mass produce their own Covid-19 vaccine. Of course, the U.S.’s brutal methods have been in bloody display through its invasions and occupations of territories overseas, from the Philippines to Vietnam to Grenada to Afghanistan and Iraq. Mai Elliot expressed in a piece about the heavy toll of the Vietnam War on the Vietnamese people at the hands of the U.S. and its South Vietnamese trained forces, By the time of the cease-fire in Vietnam in 1973, more than 10 million South Vietnamese, mostly from rural areas — well over half of the estimated total population of 17 million — had been driven from their homes by the war. The United States Senate subcommittee on refugees estimated that by 1974, over 1.4 million civilians had been killed and wounded, and attributed over 50 percent of these casualties to the firepower of American and South Vietnamese forces. These displacements and casualties were not just the byproduct of warfare but also a result of deliberate policies by the United States and South Vietnamese governments. Violence was directly harnessed by the U.S., time and time again, to “pacify” populations that needed to be held in check for U.S. interests and that of its allies to spread. The existing social order we have now, of global capitalism led by the U.S. and supported by its allies across Europe and Japan and other regions of the globe, would not have been made possible without this level of violence, coups or otherwise. However, the U.S. has also achieved its interests, such as maintaining a global capitalist system that all countries must either assimilate to or contend with in some manner (even if that means deciding to not liberalize their economies which leads to losing access to critical resources, such as foreign investment), by cultivating forms of consent to its leadership. As much as the U.S. relies on violence, its empire does not function the same way as did empires from Europe. For one thing, the Europeans usually administered direct control of their territories as a means of pacification. Hence, English officers were sent to India, to manage its bureaucracy and day-to-day policy. “Having set up the police, army, civil service, and judiciary on African soil, the colonizing powers were in a position to intervene much more directly in the economic life of the people than had been the case previously”, the anti-colonialist scholar Walter Rodney explained in his classic survey of European dominance in Africa, How Europe Underdeveloped Africa (a formidable text that everyone should read). The U.S., at first, would directly administer policies in overseas territories, as it did in its brutal occupation of the Philippines and Haiti, but unlike the Europeans, would look forward in drawing back some of its military forces, and instead, seek other ways to dominate and influence the regions it once occupied. The U.S. would accomplish its mission of retaining influence by leaving behind military bases scattered across the globe (just in case it would need to help with suppressing local revolts), as well as seeking to shape the broader political environment that countries must contend with. Bessner states, The American empire functions in a different way. It is an empire of bases, pinprick bases all around the world. It is an empire of institutions that tries to govern global trade, global security. It doesn’t exactly mirror the empires of old. U.S. foreign policymakers viewed its interests as being tied with the creation of a global capitalist order, especially during the Cold War. This is different from the era of European colonization where indeed, Europeans would collude to suppressed non-white populations globally, but ultimately, would continue to compete against one another for territory. Such competition would lead to bloody skirmishes and wars, whether it was the British fighting the Dutch “settlers” in South Africa to bloody battles between the French, the Belgian and the British across Africa more generally to scrambles over territory during WWI between the British, the French, the Germans, and Italians. The U.S., as it emerged relatively unscathed from WWII, viewed itself as the vanguard of global capital, and desired others to join its mission of creating a global order that rewarded countries who liberalized their economies, from Europe to Japan to parts of Latin America and Asia, and over time, parts of Africa. Thus, it set upon creating global institutions, along with its allies in Europe and Japan, that could shape the globe for global capitalist interests overall. Leo Panitch and Sam Gindin write in The Making of Global Capitalism: The Political Economy of American Empire, The wide international range of US firms, as well as the relative size and importance of US markets, gave American state authorities ‘tremendous leverage in pressuring foreign firms and regulatory authorities’ to adopt these rules and practices. But the inherent limits on the extraterritorial application of US law in a world of formally sovereign states also gave rise to extensive coordination of national regulations through international institutions like the newly created WTO, the World Bank, the Bank of International Settlements, and the IMF. Essentially, the U.S., knowing the limits of directly administering control overseas, sought to apply pressure on countries following WWII, including countries that were now independent from Europe, by creating a global capitalist system that horded access to critical investments and resources, such as loans and foreign investment. Immanuel Ness, professor of political science at Brooklyn college of the City University of New York, and author of Organizing Insurgency: Workers Movements in the Global South, explained how the U.S. and its allies were successful in creating a global economic system that prioritized the interests of multinational companies, of capitalists worldwide. After all, following the end of WWII, much of the globe had been ravaged, either by the war directly or by the legacy of European and U.S. imperialism (i.e. Latin America). Most importantly, countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, lacking the industrial capacity to extract and manufacture their own goods and products, or in some cases, still relying on a global marketplace to sell their goods to, desperately needed financial help from Europe and the U.S. In turn, the U.S. and its allies created the WTO, the World Bank, the IMF, as a way of sustaining this inequality in terms of access to the market and to industrial capacity. Desperate countries could either agree to the demands that the U.S. global order wanted, such as allowing for multinational companies to extract mineral wealth, or receiving loans to perhaps sustain some financial stability, or face economic marginalization, such as being denied access to sell consumer goods to Europe and the U.S. “If you opt out of the system as a whole, one will end up being isolated internationally,” Ness said. Countries such as Cuba, Iran, and Venezuela are examples of this dynamic, in which nations are denied access to the global market for following a different economic model. After the fall of the U.S.S.R and the Eastern Bloc, the dominance of the global capitalist system that the U.S. and its allies had sustained grew even stronger, since countries now lack any real alternative to the global capitalist market. Thus, countries like Cuba and Venezuela are struggling tremendously, having been denied access to the world market and in the case of Venezuela, literally having a significant portion of its reserves seized by the U.S. and other global banking interests. In the end, the U.S. has created a global capitalist system in which it doesn’t need to rely on invasion or occupation to punish countries that step out of line. The U.S. achieved this global capitalist order through explicit violence, but also, through aligning with/supporting local interests across the globe who also believed that the U.S. would protect them from the so-called scourge of communism. Consequently, when we discuss the coups that the U.S. supported, such coups were a combination of U.S. tactical support, such as providing weaponry or training to those would undertake the coup, but were also made possible because there were constituencies in those respective nations, like in Chile and other parts of Latin America, who also sought to maintain a hierarchical political system to preserve their own social and economic interests. Unlike European empires, the U.S. leans more heavily on local allies to administer control and leverage power for the broader interests of capital. For the coups to succeed in places like Chile and Indonesia, the U.S. developed connections with local constituencies, whether it was the most regressive elements in society, or liberal capitalists fearing a so-called communist takeover. Figures like Pinochet did represent a constituency of lunatics and sociopaths (a.k.a. the rich and segments of the middle class) but nonetheless, a constituency did exist, that the U.S. was more than eager to side with and bolster. “And yet in Chile, as much as one-third of the population stood with Pinochet to the end,” stated a report by NPR (the leader of finding both sides on every issue) on the legacy of Pinochet in Chile. To this day, this strategy continues, as demonstrated by the U.S. support of figures such as Jair Bolsonaro and Rodrigo Duterte, both of whom are exceedingly repulsive, and yet, still retain some measure of support/constituency for their horrid actions. Again, such figures do not necessarily represent what the majority of people desire in Brazil (Bolsonaro is slated to lose to Lula in the upcoming presidential elections) or in the Philippines, but they do inspire a level of loyalty and support among segments of the population, such as among social conservatives (anti-feminists and anti-queer) and of course, among the wealthy and segments of the middle class and the more conservative elements of the working class as well. Indeed, there was rampant support for even Duterte’s so-called war on drugs, which has meant a war on the poor, and the murder of countless people, including addicts. Even after the dreadful mismanagement of Covid-19 in the Philippines, there is still a constituency supporting Duterte, as Ted Regencia at Al Jazeera notes, writing, “Yet Duterte has continued to be hugely popular during his last 11 months. In a Pulse Asia survey on vice presidential contenders conducted this month, Duterte came out tops, while a Publicus Asia survey in July gave him an approval rating of 58 percent and a trust rating of 55 percent.” In turn, the U.S. has continued to also support for the Philippines government, which includes continuing to train its military. “While the Biden administration has declared human rights the centerpiece of its foreign policy, it has carefully avoided publicly calling out the Philippines over its controversial drug war and other alleged abuses,” Julie McCarthy at NPR writes. Despite the abuses under Bolsonaro and Duterte, and other U.S. allies, such as Narendra Modi of India, which far exceed that of countries like Cuba, they are not excluded from the global market. They are not sanctioned. They are not facing intense economic or political pressure by the U.S. and its allies. Overall, through this global capitalist system, local capitalists in countries like Brazil, the Philippines, Bangladesh and Indonesia are provided contracts by U.S. and other multinational companies to build the factories and to reap some profit as well. Through the global capitalist system, local governments feel they have very little option other than allow particular interests to continue to extract resources without paying a living wage to local workers, like in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Thus, those who would support this extractive process seek to preserve it and over time, receive some revenue for themselves as well. Through this global capitalist system, elites are allowed to reap some financial reward by also having access to the financial hubs in the U.S. and Europe. Even for countries as poor as India, the rising crop of elites find value in the way in which the global economic system is currently structured, as they’re also allowed to store their wealth in the same tax-havens and financial hubs as elites in the U.S and Europe. “The capital that they hold is not held in New Delhi or Mumbai,” Ness expressed, “It is held in London and New York more likely.” Thus, without ever having to invade, occupy or bomb, the U.S. has found other ways to maintain a global capitalist system beneficial for its interests, from building alliances among the sociopathic/selfish to rewarding those who follow its leadership, ultimately willing to hand off the role of destroyer for others to fill. COERCION & CONSENT Michael Brenes, lecturer in history at Yale University and author of For Might and Right: Cold War Defense Spending and the Remaking of American Democracy, has examined the incentives on the domestic front that allow for the U.S. empire to grow and expand. “These capitalist interests who shape the military can’t just function through sheer hegemony, through their capitalist power,” Brenes expressed to me in a recent interview about the subject of the U.S. military, adding, “They have to have people acquiesce to their power. They have to have people buy into, implicitly or explicitly, into the ways in which the military shapes their lives.” Again, there is always a level of violence undergirding U.S. empire at home as well, from the killing of various indigenous nations to the violent repression of Left anti-imperialist forces, such as the Black Panther Party and others who found meaning in the Viet Minh struggle for freedom, as well as anyone who sough to side with the international forces fighting against U.S. might. Yet, as detailed by Brenes in his work, and also, expressed in the work of historians such as Mike Davis and Nelson Lichenstein, there has also been a constituency that has grown, who will continue to mobilize against attempts as basic as even shaving off a few million from the military’s budget, let alone the shutdown of bases abroad. The coalition of actors that would over time be the ones to “defend” the military-industrial complex from reform started to take shape during WWII. It was during the war that the U.S. government, led by New Dealers, who developed jobs programs to alleviate the high levels of unemployment caused by the Great Depression. Although the New Deal was revelatory in that it did shift toward more pro-worker policies that would’ve been unheard of just a few years prior, much of its policies did not necessarily seek to create a social order beyond capitalism. Hence, in the factories, it did encourage unionization but also, hoped that unions and bosses could find a “compromise” during moments of potential upheaval. Similarly, U.S. liberals viewed the burgeoning defense industry as a means of also solving unemployment. Rather than create more government jobs programs, policymakers awarded contacts to defense companies so they could hire from the large pool of the unemployed, or those struggling, including white women, and generally, non-white workers. “[Defense contractors] start getting money for shipbuilding and submarine building and the New Deal creates jobs for defense spending,” Brenes explains, “Forty-six percent of GDP is through defense spending.” By the time the war is over, a significant portion of the employed are now working in defense industries, in New York, in places in the south, but also, in states like California, which are seen as booming. As Brenes details, there was a fear among policymakers that if such defense industries were drawn back to level prior to the war effort, the unemployment would shoot back up again. At the same time, and this would be a recurring problem, there was no discussion at the national level about how else to employ people. The Left was relatively weak, now facing the Red Scare, and the New Deal liberal establishment was very much ensconced in the belief that funding for the U.S. military was critical. Samuel Moyn writes in Dissent, “Cold War liberals put their faith in the military, and depended on spending related to it to deliver social benefits—employment, economic growth, civic purpose—in the absence of a broader welfare state.” Or, as Brenes explains, “There was no countervailing force” to the consensus forming in the political establishment nor to the growing constituency of the defense industries that benefited greatly during WWII. Indeed, when the U.S. did send troops into Korea, which was pivotal in harkening the new era of the Cold War between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. and communism worldwide, this set of interests generated the momentum and resources it had already had to grow the military budget, to maintain and expand defense contracts, to maintain and sustain the various think tanks that were willing and ready to justify U.S. Cold War strategy. Basically, there was a constituency that was able to mobilize effectively, through the connections it had made during WWII, but also due to the lack of viable opposition to its demands, which New Dealers were happy in elevating and working with for their own political agenda of keeping unemployment low, and not expanding social democracy any further. This constituency would obviously continue to grow during the Cold War, according to Brenes and solidify its roots within the halls of Congress. When the U.S.S.R. did finally collapse, this constituency mobilized, which included workers who were (understandably so), desperate to keep their jobs, especially considering how neoliberalism had succeeded in cutting away any real form of social safety net that people could rely on, or had reduced the jobs that were available more broadly to low-wage occupations. Those who mobilized, included the white-collar engineer as well as the blue-collar on the ground floor actively putting together the weaponry that the company would sell to the U.S. government or to allies abroad. “They mobilize under their labor unions, they seek politicians out who can lobby Congress or get Congress to change, to stop cuts to defense programs that are going to impact them,” said Brenes. Hence, following the so-called end of the Cold War, the U.S. military’s budget has grown, with interests embedded within the halls of power ready to lobby, from the CEOs and to segments of the workforce, to seek out future threats, from “jihadis” during the War on Terror, and now, China. Writing in the Christian Science Monitor, liberal economist Robert Reich explains how robust this constituency that would be against military cuts remains. Over 1,400,000 Americans are now on active duty; another 833,000 are in the reserves, many full time. Another 1,600,000 Americans work in companies that supply the military with everything from weapons to utensils. (I’m not even including all the foreign contractors employing non-US citizens.) If we didn’t have this giant military jobs program, the U.S. unemployment rate would be over 11.5 percent today instead of 9.5 percent. Therefore, policymakers in Washington have now a vested interest in sustaining the current levels of U.S. spending on the military out of fears of jeopardizing the economy and having to face off against a significant constituency of people who would be willing to defend the status quo. In early September of this year alone, the U.S. House of Representatives Armed Services Committee supported raising the military budget by another $25 billion in a time when rent moratoriums are being lifted and most Americans are struggling financially. Further, there has also been a group of lawmakers who have been drawn closer into the orbit of defense contractors and pro-military defense big spenders. This, obviously, includes lawmakers in Congress who now have stocks in major defense companies. “According to a Sludge review of financial disclosures, 51 members of Congress and their spouses own between $2.3 and $5.8 million worth of stocks in companies that are among the top 30 defense contractors in the world” Donald Shaw and David Moore write at The American Prospect, adding, “The House Foreign Affairs Committee oversees arms controls and exports, yet at least four of its members have investments in defense companies whose foreign sales fall under their jurisdiction.” Last year, the defense companies in the U.S. had sold $175 billion worth of weaponry to other countries, which was a 3% increase from 2019. According to Stephen Losley at Military.com, the “revolving door” of influence between lawmakers and the U.S. defense industry is across partisan lines, and includes not just critical figures on committees, but also those who directly advise the executive on military strategy and other military-related issues. The practice appears unlikely to change significantly under the Biden administration. The report notes that while President Joe Biden issued an order restricting officials who leave the White House from quickly lobbying the executive branch or registering as foreign agents, several of his appointees have ties to the defense industry. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, for example, sat on Raytheon’s board before joining the administration. Finally, there is also, the fact that some Congresspeople do rely on the defense industry to provide jobs in their districts, in California, in the south, in areas in the Northeast and mid-Atlantic (i.e. parts of Maryland and Virginia), what Brenes has called the “gunbelt”. In 2012, when President Obama did float the idea of cutting military spending, those who would be against such an effort knew there was a worker constituency they could mobilize and wield against such a proposal. At the time, Dina Rasor at Truthout wrote, One of the most vocal defenders of the Pentagon budget is Rep. Buck McKeon (R-California), chairman of the House Armed Services Committee. He insisted, along with Pentagon companies such as Lockheed, that according to federal law, these large Pentagon contractors would have to send out thousands of warning pink slips to defense workers across the country that their jobs may be eliminated just a few weeks before the presidential election. I am sure that they thought that that would put President Obama in a box of facing voters in key states such as Virginia and Colorado because possible defense cuts would also mean pink slips, anticipated job losses and panic at the polls. As the U.S. now begins to apply pressure on China and portray China as an “existential” threat to all that is holy, one must trace the roots of this new Cold War to the fact that there is a constituency, a coalition of material interests, who depend on war, including a segment of the U.S. workforce. “Once these institutions are created, they don’t have an interest in getting undone,” Brenes said, “There’s a material basis for them to function, to seek out new threats.”

#### Anti-trust is the next step in perfecting American empire---discourses of competition and innovation turn the state into a competitive entity in the global economy, solidifying a state-corporate nexus that cements elite power.

Fougner 6, Associate Professor of International Relations @ Bilkent University (Tore, The State, International Competitiveness and Neoliberal Globalization: Is There a Future Beyond “The Competition State,” *Review of International Studies*, No. 32, DOI: 10.1017/S0260210506006978)

Neoliberal global governance and international competitiveness

The changes in both the meaning of international competitiveness and the terms of international competitiveness as a governmental problem discussed above can to some extent be seen to follow also from contemporary efforts to govern the world economy in accordance with a neoliberal rationality of government.52 In short, this governmental rationality can be characterised as one within which governance is reflected on with the aid of a vocabulary that includes ‘competition’, ‘market’, ‘freedom’, ‘choice’, ‘customer orientation’, ‘efficiency’ and ‘flexibility’ as core concepts; ‘the market’ is constituted as the ideal in relation to which governance should be oriented; it is accepted that markets can exist only under specific political, legal and institutional conditions that must be actively established by authorities; individual and/or individualised entities are constituted and acted upon as flexible and manipulable subjects with a rationality derived from arranged forms of entrepreneurial and competitive behaviour; the main responsibility for economic activity is ascribed to private market actors; and interventions in such activity on the part of authorities are, if accepted at all, given a theoretical justification based on ideas of market failure or imperfection.

With regard to contemporary reflections and practices on the part of the key international organisations engaged in ‘the management of the global economy’ or ‘global economic policy-making’ (such as the WTO, the IMF, the IBRD and, more indirectly, the OECD), there should be little doubt that a seemingly free and self-regulating global market is constituted as the ideal in relation to which governance should be oriented.53 Moreover, and in spite of the tendency to naturalise or depoliticise the establishment of an open and competitive global marketplace with reference to ‘technological developments’ and ‘market integration’, there is a fairly clear acknowledgement that the realisation of a global marketplace is dependent not only on active state dismantling of barriers to the free flow of goods, services and capital, but also on the putting in place of the basic political, legal and institutional framework in and through which a market is constituted (property rights, contract rights, and so on) and policed on a continuous basis (competition policy).

The acknowledgement of a global marketplace not being self-constitutive is perhaps most evident in the inclusion of ‘competition policy’ on the WTO’s agenda during the Ministerial Conference in Singapore in 1996. Its inclusion rests to a very large extent on the recognition that competitive behaviour on the part of firms is not something that follows automatically or naturally from a removal of state barriers to the free flow of goods, services and capital. Rather, and as reflected also in the presence of sizeable competition authorities in all so-called market economies, such behaviour must be not only regulated into being, but also policed on a continuous basis. As noted in a report prepared by WTO’s Working Group on the Interaction between Trade and Competition Policy:

The very rationale for discussing competition policy in the context of the WTO was, in fact, the concern that once government policy-induced restrictions were removed through the implementation by Members of the Uruguay Round commitments, the vacated space might be occupied by private enterprises of an anti-competitive nature.54

While the above implies that states and inter-statal authorities are ascribed a central role in connection with the constitution and policing of a competitive global marketplace, it is explicitly or implicitly given that the responsibility for economic activities as such should rest solely with a private-capitalist business community. In spite of this, however, and despite also what seems to be a growing tendency to conceive of ‘government failure’ as being a greater problem than ‘market failure’, there remains as of today an opening for ‘market interventions’ in accordance with a theoretical argument based on the idea of market failure. As for instance noted by Deputy Managing Director Eduardo Aninat of the IMF, ‘there can be no substitute for supranational efforts to tackle those aspects of globalisation – financial contagion, global warming or marginalisation and social exclusion – that markets can still only imperfectly deal with’.55

In the context of the present article, the important point to note is that the increasingly prominent conception of international competitiveness in terms of ‘attractiveness’ presupposes (re)locational freedom on the part of capital, and that the granting and securing of such freedom is integral to ongoing efforts to govern the world economy according to a neoliberal rationality of government. Although there is currently no comprehensive multilateral framework in place to secure the operational freedom of capital on a planetary scale – an unfortunate result, some might say, of the collapse of the OECD-initiated negotiations on a Multilateral Agreement on Investment in 1998 – FDI-related conditions attached to structural adjustment loans, the steadily growing number of very similar bilateral investment treaties, and the creeping multilateralisation of FDI-related rules within the WTO are de facto bringing the world in that direction.56

International competitiveness and neoliberal governance of states

While efforts to govern the world economy according to a neoliberal rationality of government have contributed to pave the way for the prominent position of ‘attractiveness’ in contemporary reflections on international competitiveness, the contemporary discourse on international competitiveness is central to how states themselves are increasingly subjected to a form of neoliberal governance in the world political economy – this in the sense that they are constituted and acted upon as flexible and manipulable market actors in and through it. In order to place this claim in a broader perspective, a closer look at how the state is constituted as a sovereign, (self)disciplined and competitive entity in connection with contemporary efforts at neoliberal global governance is warranted.

The state as a sovereign entity

Within the context of neoliberal global governance, it can initially be argued that the state is constituted as a sovereign juridico-political entity – this as a consequence of the role that states and/or things inter-statal are ascribed in connection with the constitution and regulation of a global marketplace. The main point here is not that the state is somehow pre- or self-constituted as a sovereign entity, but rather that the entry into intergovernmental regulatory schemes and participation in multilateral organisations make up central elements in the continuous practice in and through which a state is constituted as sovereign vis-à-vis other co-sovereignised states. Moreover, states (as governments) are also presumed to be sovereign vis-à-vis the subjects of the state, since the effectiveness of international regulatory schemes depend on the state’s ability to put them into practice domestically.

The state as a (self)disciplined entity

Beyond its constitution as sovereign, the state is constituted also as a (self)disciplined entity in connection with contemporary efforts to constitute a global marketplace. In more specific terms, it is thus constituted in relation to both international rules and norms, and globally mobile or footloose capital. The former kind of discipline concerns the constraints that a set of international rules and norms place on the policy options available to state authorities. If the rules and norms in question are considered in relation to intergovernmental agreements, then the constraints follow from a state’s legal obligations under international economic law. In this connection, the actions and policies on the part of state authorities are subjected to continuous surveillance by other parties to the agreements and/or the bodies authorised to oversee them, and disciplinary measures are expected to follow in the case that they break with international law. While there is nothing new in (self)discipline on the part of states in relation to interstate law and agreements, certain developments in the field of international economic law imply both a broadening of constraints and a strengthening of disciplinary enforcement mechanisms.

This is undoubtedly the case with the WTO-agreement of 1994, which has been considered by supporters and critics alike as performing constitutional functions and/or being an incipient global economic constitution.57 While supporters inspired by public choice theory or constitutional economics consider such constitutionalism to serve as a counterbalance to the influence of protectionist or anti-globalist interest groups on state decision-making processes,58 critics like Stephen Gill consider the ‘new constitutionalism’ in question as an essentially undemocratic means through which neoliberal reforms are ‘locked-in’, and state authorities and people in general are handcuffed in relation to a seemingly autonomous economic sphere of reality at the global level.59 Whichever way one wants to see it, the constitutionalism in question is not just any kind of constitutionalism, but a neoliberal one that conceives of a constitution solely as a means to impose limits on state authorities.60

With respect to the second kind of discipline, the issue concerns the constraints that the mobility of capital is claimed to have placed on the policy options available to state authorities. Although this form of discipline is most often portrayed as something involuntary by representatives of state authorities, it should be fairly obvious that it follows more or less automatically from the neoliberal efforts to constitute a global marketplace in general, and to ‘liberate’ the flow and operation of capital and investments in particular. Expressed somewhat differently, once capital is reconstituted at a global level, state authorities can seemingly not do much else but either discipline themselves in relation to, or forcefully be disciplined by, the ‘global logic’ of so-called market forces:

In today’s borderless economy, the workings of the ‘invisible hand’ have a reach and strength beyond anything Adam Smith ever could have imagined. . . . [E]conomic activity is what defines the landscape on which all other institutions, including political institutions, must operate. . . . [T]he often instantaneous movement of people, ideas, information, and capital across borders means that decisions are swayed by the threat that needed resources [or economic activity] will go elsewhere.61

Certain forms of short-term portfolio investments and credit arrangements aside, the ‘quicksilver’ nature often ascribed to contemporary capital and investments is in no way beyond question.62 In spite of this, state authorities can hardly know exactly what it takes for various forms of capital to react negatively and fly or shy away from its territory. With regard to (self)discipline on the part of state authorities, this uncertainty can in itself do the trick: Knowing that the ‘capacity’ on the part of capital to move is there,63 knowing that they and their policies are being scrutinised and surveilled on a continuous basis by a vast array of private-capitalist institutions (firms, banks, credit-rating agencies, political risk analysts, and so on), knowing that each and every ‘wrong’ move on their part will be instantaneously registered and circulated, and thinking and being told that such moves might provoke a negative reaction on the part of capital claimed to be globally footloose – state authorities can easily reach the conclusion that self-restraint is the most feasible policy option.

The state as a competitive entity

Though somewhat more indirectly, the state is constituted also as a competitive entity in connection with contemporary efforts to constitute a global marketplace. While some might consider this a mere by-product of the state’s constitution as a (self)disciplined entity – this in the sense that the state is left with no option but to compete for capital – the argument made here is that the state is constituted and acted upon as a flexible and manipulable market actor in and through the discourse on international competitiveness. With international competitiveness conceived in terms of ‘attractiveness’, the state is commodified,64 and statesmanship is transformed into salesmanship – not in the old ‘trade mission’ sense of promoting the products and services of ‘national’ firms in external markets, but in the sense of selling the state as a location to globally footloose capital and firms. With ‘selling’ understood in the broad sense of developing, branding, promoting, marketing and selling a product, the state is constituted as a competitor and entrepreneur operating in a global ‘market for investment’.65

According to neoliberal public choice theory, the constitution of states as such competitive and entrepreneurial entities approximates a normative ideal. The reason for this is that what Horst Siebert has called ‘locational competition’66 is often considered ‘a substitute for more overt attempts to contain a government’s Leviathan tendencies such as constitutional amendments’.67 Assuming both that ‘countries can benefit economically from luring factors into their jurisdiction’, and that ‘[i]ndividuals may ‘‘vote by their feet’’ and move either themselves or capital to the most preferred jurisdiction’, state authorities ‘will, driven by their self interest, compete in offering favorable rules and institutions . . . to mobile factors’.68 Although current conditions approximate their normative ideal, public choice theorists can nevertheless be expected to identify the following deficiency in locational competition of the kind discussed above: since competitive behaviour is considered as unnatural for state authorities as it is for firms, ‘[c]ompetition among governments, like competition among firms, cannot be left to itself’:69

Horizontal competition among governments not only requires the removal of barriers to trade, capital movements, and migration and the enforcement of private contracts in inter-state commerce and finance. State governments must not only be prevented from protecting their territorial tax and regulatory monopolies against interjurisdictional substitution by the market. They must also be prevented from setting up tax and regulatory cartels among themselves. Moreover, if horizontal competition is not to be distorted, the competing governments must not be permitted to impose negative non-market externalities – like war, pollution, claim-jumping or cost-raising majority decisions – on each other.70

Although there is currently no federal or supranational authority in place to arrange and police the efficient operation of locational competition among states, there are plenty of actors that work to (re)constitute and act on states as flexible and manipulable market actors on a continuous basis.71 These include IGOs like the OECD, UNCTAD and development banks, whose policy guidelines are often framed in terms of the need of states to compete for footloose capital;72 institutions like the IMD and the WEF, whose competitiveness indices function as benchmarks with respect to the relative ability of states to attract footloose capital;73 scholars from various branches of Business Administration, whose ‘how-to-compete’ knowledge is adapted to and targeted at states-as-competitors;74 consultancy and public relations firms, whose services are promoted vis-à-vis state authorities with reference to their need to compete for footloose capital;75 and individual firms, whose bidding contests or ‘locational tournaments’ in connection with particular investments pit two or more locations against each other.76 Furthermore, and partly in response to the above, state authorities throughout the world have increasingly equipped themselves with national competitiveness councils, national competitiveness reports, investment promotion agencies and so on, in and through which they (re)constitute and act on themselves and their populations as competitive and entrepreneurial ‘place-sellers’ in a global market for investment.77

With regard to state policies and institutions, the shift from aggressiveness to attractiveness in reflections on international competitiveness can be claimed to stimulate both convergence and divergence. On the one hand, locational competition stimulates convergence as state authorities increasingly compare their policies and institutions to those of competitors, and seek to adopt the ‘best practice’ or ‘best offer’ around in order to remain in the locational game. The necessity of being attentive to ‘the needs of the market’ is alpha and omega, and given the policies and institutions considered to be of general importance in attracting capital – security and freedom for capital, a stable and predictable legislative environment, a supportive material and technological infrastructure, a well-educated workforce, and a businessfriendly environment in general (low corporate taxes, flexible labour markets, and so on) – this makes for a certain degree of convergence towards neoliberal state governance.

On the other hand, locational competition also stimulates divergence of a kind, as it becomes of paramount importance for states to stand out as different and better in order to appear attractive in the eyes of capital. In spite of this, however, the option of being different is increasingly constrained as a result of not only the competitive market logic mentioned above, but also how intergovernmental regulatory schemes dig deeper and deeper into what was previously conceived as a ‘domestic’ sphere, and leave less and less space for policies and institutional arrangements that break significantly with the neoliberal norm. Differences do remain, but it is increasingly a question of cosmetic brand-and-packaging differences within the context of the state’s constitution as a dual ‘entrepreneurial state’ – that is, one in which state authorities seek not only to promote entrepreneurship within a ‘national’ space, but also to act entrepreneurially in developing and selling that space as a place-commodity in a global marketplace.78

To round off this discussion on state salesmanship, it should be mentioned that it must to some extent also take residents at large into consideration. The reason for this is not merely that they are part and parcel of the product to be sold, nor that they have the undemocratic privilege to ‘vote with their feet’, but rather that they might rebel and undermine a particular strategy to sell a state. With place-selling being a question not of selling a place with a given identity or product qualities, but rather of the representational and material adaptation of a place to that which is assumed to attract capital, the potential for resistance follows from both how all placeconstructions can be contested and made subject to conflict, and how the reality effects of place-representation and -adaptation are likely to vary among different groups of people.79 Against this background, the ‘economic logic’ through which a place is marketed and sold as something attractive for globally footloose capital must be complemented with a ‘social logic’ through which immobile residents are given a sense of being part of a successful community.80 In this connection, it is somewhat paradoxical to note that the very discourse necessitating such ‘engineering [of] social consensus’81 – that is, the discourse of international competitiveness – seems to have become increasingly central in contemporary processes of identity construction at both state and regional levels.82

Conclusion

The basic idea informing this article has been that the transgression of something that is currently conceived as a given ‘fact of life’ can be facilitated by showing both that what is, has not always been and, in consequence, need not always be in the future; and that what is, is internal not to an unchanging nature, but rather to politics or relations of power. In accordance with this, the article has showed that the problem of international competitiveness has a quite specific history of emergence and transformation internal to state and global forms of governance, and that the discourse of international competitiveness is currently at the centre not only of how state authorities conduct their business, but also how their conduct is shaped and manipulated by other actors in the world political economy.

The broader significance of this (re)problematisation of the problem of international competitiveness lies in its potential contribution to the opening up of a space of possibility for the state to become something other than a competitive entity. In this connection, the issue at stake today is not so much the absence of state conceptions that somehow run counter to the neoliberal one of the state as a competitive entity, as the hegemonic position of the neoliberal problem and discourse of competitiveness as such. If the latter is left unchallenged, as is the case in much of the competition state literature, then alternative state conceptions will unavoidably be assessed in terms of international competitiveness and, in consequence, stand little chance of prevailing in any but distorted and marginal ways.83 Against this background, the historisation and politicisation of the problem of international competitiveness provided in this article can contribute both to make the concept of international competitiveness fall from its current grace, and increase people’s receptivity to both existing and prospective alternatives to the neoliberal conception of the state.

With regard to the prospect of the state becoming something other than a competitve entity, an opening might also follow from how the state has been shown to be constituted as a three-headed troll that is competitive, disciplined and sovereign within the context of contemporary efforts at neoliberal global governance. As sovereign entities, states retain the option to put an end to capital mobility, and thereby both reverse the power relationship that currently characterises their relations with transnational capital, and deny non-state actors the opportunity to act upon and manipulate their conduct at a distance. The key point to note, however, is that the hegemony of neoliberalism as a rationality of government has led states to practice sovereignty in a way that effectively subjects them to such external discipline and governance – this, by engaging in efforts to constitute a global marketplace. Moreover, neoliberal global governance is considered such a precious undertaking today that state authorities have voluntarily, if not proactively, adapted to it by both exercising a high degree of self-discipline, and acting on themselves and their populations as competitors in a global market for investment.

While an understanding of the state as an externally disciplined entity has the potential to stimulate popular opposition and resistance to contemporary forms of neoliberal global governance – in part, because many people simply do not appreciate being forced to do things that they otherwise would not want to do – this understanding seems at present to be much less prevalent in the popular imagination than the one of the state as a competitive entity. Given both the seemingly ahistorical and apolitical nature of the problem of international competitiveness, and how the quest for improved competitiveness can rather easily be represented as part of a positive national project, this situation can be claimed to inhibit the emergence of more broadly-based popular resistance.84 Against this background, the (re)problematisation of the problem of international competitiveness provided in this article can contribute to delegitimise attempts to rally people behind national competitiveness projects, and provide additional stimulus to popular opposition and resistance to contemporary efforts to constitute a global marketplace.85

In the final analysis, however, the possibility for the state to become something other than a competitive entity is likely to depend also on a more general de-hegemonisation of neoliberalism as a rationality of government. The reason for this is that the constitution and governance of the state as a competitive entity is most properly considered as integral to a more comprehensive process in and through which subjects of various kinds are thus constituted and governed in all spheres and at all levels of social life. As of today, economic logic has so successfully colonised human thought and conduct that it seems unlikely that decolonisation related to states and interstate relations can be achieved if the logic as such continues to reign almost supreme in social life more generally. Considered in this broader context, the present article makes but a modest contribution to more comprehensive efforts aimed at enabling individuals and collectivities alike to break free from an increasingly imperialistic neoliberal governmentality.

#### The AFF’s claim that the US must lead on fin-tech is based on a western teleology that drives a never-ending crusade against difference---that sustains global imperialist governance and turns solvency by motivating backlash against cooperative efforts.

Lieven 21, Senior research fellow on Russia and Europe at the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft. He was formerly a professor at Georgetown University in Qatar and in the War Studies Department of King’s College London. He is a member of the academic board of the Valdai discussion club in Russia, and a member of the advisory committee of the South Asia Department of the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office. He holds a BA and PhD from Cambridge University in England (Anatol, Vindicating Realist Internationalism, *Survival*, Vol. 63, Issue 5, DOI: 10.1080/00396338.2021.1978746)

The intellectual deficiency of liberal internationalism

The contribution of liberal internationalism to the refusal to study stems from its universalist teleology: the belief that Western-style liberal democracy is the only viable and legitimate form of government for every human society, as expressed in the 2002 National Security Strategy and in Blair’s Chicago speech; that every human society is at any time capable of adopting liberal democracy; and that human progress depends entirely on liberal democracy. This belief is amply reflected in the Soviet-style language of much US rhetoric about the inevitable march of Western-inspired democratic progress.20 This being so, there is really no intellectual point in studying the cultures, societies and traditions of any other country; and there is a very strong unconscious emotional motive not to study them, for to do so might – God forbid! – lead liberal internationalists to question whether their models really are either universally valid or inevitably bound to prevail.

Their teleology also makes many liberal internationalists fatally receptive to the blandishments of ambitious local pseudo-democratic charmers such as Ahmad Chalabi, who have learned to speak the language of liberal internationalism. No very sophisticated seduction is necessary – a few phrases from a liberal-democratic phrase book are enough. Western liberal internationalists have read political leaders like Aung San Suu Kyi and Alexei Navalny as Western-style liberals, in the process obscuring both their nationalism and the realities of the political cultures in which they operate. And liberals built up the reputations of sympathetic liberal intellectuals such as former Afghan president Ashraf Ghani, ushering him to power in a country which – as was already apparent in Ghani’s 2008 book and has been amply confirmed by subsequent events – he did not really understand and was quite incapable of governing.21

A few lines from liberal phrase books substantially constitute the intellectual basis on which the West set out to reconstruct Afghanistan after 2001, with dire results that are now evident.22 Once again, liberal-internationalist teleology contributed to a blind refusal – for 20 years – to study Afghan history and culture, and to learn from the failure of previous attempts to create a modern Afghan state, or from the success (in their own culturally specific and ferocious way) of the Taliban.

Elections rigged by local warlords were presented as and believed to be ‘the Afghan people choosing democracy’. Afghan non-governmental organizations in Kabul (some of them brave and committed, others cynical, phony and opportunist) were dubbed ‘Afghan civil society’. Their importance in Afghanistan was colossally inflated by liberal internationalists, and their overwhelming dependence on Western support was ignored.23 Liberal inter-nationalism was not solely responsible for turning the Afghan campaign from a limited anti-terrorism operation into a vast, misconceived, inappropriate, bloodstained, monstrously expensive and ultimately doomed project of democratic nation-building – but it certainly played its part.

Blinded by ideological self-deceit and conceit, liberal internationalists participated in what was in effect a massive public fraud on Western voters, taxpayers, and most of all the Western soldiers who were killed and disabled in Afghanistan: that the painted facade of Afghan ‘democracy’ was that of a hard-working building site and not a ramshackle slum. Demonstrating the extraordinary grip of this illusion on some members of the liberal-internationalist-cum-neoconservative camp, at least as a rhetorical trope, Anne Applebaum could write an article in support of the failed Western campaign there in August 2021 entitled ‘Liberal Democracy Is Worth a Fight’ even after the collapse of the Afghan state had demonstrated its utter rottenness and the falsity of its ‘democracy’.24

Moreover, as we have seen in Afghanistan, as in Libya and elsewhere, the liberal-internationalist ethos (based on what Weber called Gesinnungsethik, an ‘ethic of sentiment’, as opposed to the ethic of responsibility, prudence and study that he said is appropriate to statesmen) has not fostered any true sense of Western responsibility to and for these countries. A combination of self-flattering, feel-good humanitarianism and shallow ideological nostrums has not motivated Western societies and their elites to make a real commitment to turn Afghanistan into a successful democracy – at least not if that involved personal risk and sacrifice. American, British and some other NATO troops have fought bravely and suffered heavy casualties, and many aid workers have demonstrated courage and commitment. Most official Western institutions, however, cited the infamous principle of the ‘duty of care’ as a reason to keep their staffs out of real danger, while the vast majority of Western politicians and commentators who advocated state-building in Afghanistan and elsewhere limited their visits to a few days in secure locations. In the end, the remaining Westerners fled to the airport – in the case of the Dutch and Swedes, apparently without informing their Afghan staff that they were abandoning them.25

Do Deudney and Ikenberry think a spirit like that will ever succeed in building democracy in places like Afghanistan, and against foes like the Taliban? A phrase from a BBC report on the evacuation of Westerners from Kabul says it all: ‘Staff at the Dutch embassy have faced criticism after saying they did not have time [to] tell Afghan colleagues they were going.’26 So much for the most successful alliance in history, as the liberal establishment is fond of calling NATO. Nor, it seems, will any Western general, official, politician or public intellectual be held personally responsible for the Afghan disaster. What we can do is learn the lessons of that disaster, and make sure that those intellectually responsible do not simply hop lightly from one cause to another.

In this vein, it is essential that Ikenberry and Deudney’s ideology not be allowed to conceal its complicity in the disasters of Iraq, Libya and Afghanistan. After Vietnam, there seemed to be a good chance that there would at last be a rigorous critique of the nationalist myths of America’s right and duty to lead the world to freedom and democracy, of American exceptionalism and righteous innocence, that had helped to foster and justify the war in Vietnam. But as C. Vann Woodward wrote bitterly at the time: ‘The characteristic American adjustment to the current foreign and domestic enigmas that confound our national myths has not been to abandon the myths but to reaffirm them. Solutions are sought along traditional lines … Whatever the differences and enmities that divide advocates and opponents (and they are admittedly formidable), both sides seem predominantly unshaken in their adherence to one or another or all of the common national myths.’27

Liberal-internationalist ideology, feeding into American nationalist exceptionalism, played a critical role in erasing Vietnam’s lessons from America’s public consciousness. As a result, in the run-up to the Iraq War, I discovered to my horror that only a small minority of American students whom I taught – most previously schooled by liberal-internationalist colleagues – had ever heard of the My Lai massacre. Consequently, only a few were capable of understanding that US troops might commit atrocities again. And only a tiny proportion of American liberal-internationalist intellectuals seemed capable of understanding that problems in the future US occupation of Iraq might stem not only from the nature of Iraq, but from that of the United States itself.

The blinkered arrogance of liberal internationalism

An even more damaging aspect of liberal-internationalist ideology, amply on display in Deudney and Ikenberry’s essay, is its denial of legitimacy to other political systems. The liberal-internationalist crusading impulse to destroy those systems in turn produces a compulsive need to present them as aggressive and comprehensive enemies, thereby helping to justify hostility to them. Hence the authors’ description of China as representing a ‘comprehensive threat’ to the West. It doesn’t. Unlike the Soviet Union, China is not trying to spread revolution or subvert other political systems. In Africa and Latin America, its presence is almost purely economic. Outside the South China Sea, China has one very small naval station at Djibouti. America, by contrast, has dozens of very large overseas bases. The US bases in South Korea and Guam, and at Okinawa and Yokosuka in Japan, also mean that there is not even a real threat to America’s military presence and alliances in East Asia – unless one assumes that the Chinese are maniacs who would risk nuclear annihilation by a direct attack on the US.

China has created – for the moment at least; it may not last – an example of successful authoritarian state-led capitalist development not entirely unlike those previously set by Japan, South Korea and Taiwan. Other countries are free to imitate that example, or not, as they choose. The challenge to the West is to strengthen the attractiveness of our own example through successful (though often painful) domestic reform. But Ikenberry and Deudney’s great democratic crusade requires a great infidel threat as an enemy and justification, and they must force China into the frame left behind by the collapse of the Soviet Union and communism, however bad the fit.

In his book Nationalism, Elie Kedourie incisively critiqued this attitude and its consequences, as it emerged in a soft form in Immanuel Kant’s Project for Perpetual Peace and in a very hard form in the external policies of the French Revolution.28 In eighteenth-century Europe, Kedourie wrote, the ‘balance of power’ system which limited wars and created a space for common European cultural development rested on the mutual recognition of the legitimacy of states with different religions and political systems, as this had emerged from the Treaty of Westphalia that ended the great religious wars:

[The] assumption was that the title of any government to rule did not depend on the origins of its power. Thus the society of European states admitted all kinds of republics, of hereditary and elective monarchies, of constitutional and despotic regimes. But on the principle advocated by the revolutionaries, the title of all governments then existing was put into question; since they did not derive their sovereignty from the nation, they were usurpers with whom no agreement need be binding, and to whom subjects owed no allegiance. It is clear that such a doctrine would envenom international quarrels, and render them quite recalcitrant to the methods of traditional statecraft; it would indeed subvert all international relations as hitherto known … By its very nature, this new style ran to extremes. It represented politics as a fight for principles, not the endless composition of claims in conflict. But since principles do not abolish interests, a pernicious confusion resulted. The ambitions of a state or the designs of a faction took on the purity of principle, compromise was treason, and a tone of exasperated intransigence became common between rivals and opponents.29

Does this not sound all too like the conflation of liberal-internationalist ideology and American hegemonic ambition in the world today? Or, as Woodward wrote in a great critique of the American myths that contributed to the disaster of Vietnam and a range of criminal US actions internationally,

The true American mission, according to those who support this view, is a moral crusade on a worldwide scale. Such people are likely to concede no validity whatever and grant no hearing to the opposing point of view, and to appeal to a higher law to justify bloody and revolting means in the name of a noble end … The irony of the moralistic approach, when exploited by nationalism, is that the high motive to end justice and immorality actually results in making war more amoral and horrible than ever and in shattering the foundations of the political and moral order upon which peace has to be built.30

In the 1790s, the denial of legitimacy to states not based on the ‘sovereignty of the people’ became mixed up with French nationalism and imperialism, and as a political ideal was carried forth on the bayonets of the French Republican and Napoleonic armies. But, as Maximilien Robespierre remarked in one of his more lucid moments, ‘no-one likes armed missionaries’. The marriage of the French revolutionary threat to states with French military aggression against populations bred conservative–nationalist reactions in Germany and elsewhere that were to haunt Europe for generations to come and produce their most dreadful fruits in the mid-twentieth century. This is why, in his book The China Choice, Hugh White makes US (and Australian) recognition of the legitimacy of the Chinese state system a central condition of peaceful coexistence with China.31 Ikenberry and Deudney do say that selective cooperation with China on issues such as climate change should accompany wider US geopolitical and ideological confrontation with China. But first of all, if climate change escapes human control, do they really think that historians 100 years from now are going to think that present US disagreements with China were the most important dangers facing humanity, or America? And secondly, is intensive cooperation against climate change really compatible with deep, ideologically driven distrust of China, and an intensive propaganda campaign to undermine the Chinese communist state? These are the policies of the Biden administration, which Ikenberry and Deudney strongly support.

The Chinese and Russian governments exaggerate (for obvious domestic effect) the degree of any active US official commitment to overthrowing them. However, congressionally funded advocacy institutions such as the National Endowment for Democracy and news outlets like Voice of America certainly display this commitment, while successive US administrations have made clear their view that the existing state systems of both countries are fundamentally illegitimate. Moscow and Beijing naturally regard this position as a threat to vital state interests, just as Americans regard Russian interference in the US electoral process as a threat to the vital interests of the United States. The result has been a vicious circle of reciprocal paranoia that is utterly destructive of hopes for serious cooperation in any field.

Liberal internationalists also need to understand that many ordinary citizens of Russia, China and other authoritarian states share their anxieties about American intentions. Bitter historical memories of chaos and mass suffering have created a deep sense that the overthrow of the existing state system will lead to the destruction of the state itself, with tragic consequences for the population. In recent years, these fears have been intensified by the terrible consequences of the US and allied destruction of the regimes in Iraq and Libya, which did indeed lead to the collapse of those states. Such examples have fostered a widespread popular belief in China, Iran and Russia that Americans are deliberately seeking the destruction of their respective states, at whatever cost to their peoples. I am sure Ikenberry and Deudney do not support any such agenda. But can they sincerely state that the neo-conservatives – with whom the liberal internationalists heavily overlap in supporting an American strategy of spreading democracy – do not?

#### U.S. Fintech leadership reinforces gross exploitation and white supremacy

Friedline 21 Friedline, Terri. Banking on a Revolution: Why Financial Technology Won't Save a Broken System. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2021. ND.

Beyond unequal landscapes and cost burdens, marginalization also may be amplified based on the ways that fintech embeds society’s destructive systems. Fintech and its supporters often operate under the assumption that digital and financial technologies can be developed devoid of white supremacy and financialized racial neoliberal capitalism. For example, as the Co-Director of MIT’s Initiative on the Digital Economy, Andrew McAfee, said in 2018, “If you want the bias out, get the algorithms in.” 66 This sentiment is shared by IBM Fellows Aleksandra Mojsilovic and John Smith, who believe that algorithms can be trained to reduce or eliminate any racial biases built in by their designers. 67 Even Stephen Schwarzman, Chief Executive-Officer (CEO) of Blackstone (yes, the same monopoly-esque investment corporation that is a central figure in Chapter 4), has chimed in on this possibility. Penning an opinion–editorial for The Washington Post in 2019 in a somewhat satirical caricature given his perch atop global capitalism, Schwarzman espoused the importance of an “ethics driven approach” to fintech. 68 Schwarzman described a multidisciplinary approach as sufficient for preventing broadly conceptualized “biases” and ensuring that fintech’s “powerful capabilities are a net positive for people and workers.” In other words, fintech’s disadvantages can be overlooked so long as advantages accrue on average. This viewpoint actually means that any disadvantages can be overlooked because “on average” (or “net positive, ” in Schwarzman’s terms) is code for white. 69 Fintech is acceptable—even ethical—so long as advantages accrue to whites (preferably wealthy elites) while averages disguise vast underlying racial disparities. For example, reporting the median net worth of $78,000 for all households in 2016 would conceal the fact that the median value of white households’ net worth is 41 times greater than that of Black households. 70 In fact, coders, computer scientists, engineers, and other designers—many of whom are white 71—stitch fintech and other technological advancements onto the fabric of society’s systems, 72 developing it as a tool for hoarding capitalism’s wealth. Insidiously, fintech is also developing as tool for surveilling and preying on Black and Brown communities by requiring individuals to sacrifice their privacy in order to participate. 73 This requirement disproportionately subjects people of color to ubiquitous, targeted surveillance that they are already experiencing in other contexts such as law enforcement, 74 education, 75 public welfare, 76 and housing. 77 White fintech users who experience technologies’ benefits without racist exploitation or wealth extraction may actually be contributing to mass surveillance that disproportionately impacts Black and Brown people. Like a white property owner ignoring how their predatory contract agreement contributed to the pattern of mass wealth extraction from Black and Brown communities, white fintech designers and users may similarly discount how their willingness—even eagerness—to sacrifice their privacy in exchange for fintech’s benefits may come with the costs of mass surveillance in the context of the financial system. And, if there was ever a case for history repeating itself, Black and Brown communities will disproportionally accrue the disadvantages if fintech marches full steam ahead without the voices of marginalized communities at the helm. 78 Fintech’s ability to accelerate the concentration of wealth can be overlooked when overemphasizing fintech for individuals. However, the problems with fintech for individuals are a microcosm of what is being acted out on a larger scale. For instance, Pagaya Investments, a U.S.–Israeli fintech start-up that describes its technology as the next generation of asset management investing, 79 announced in 2019 its complete reliance on machine learning and big data analytics to manage its $100 million portfolio. 80 Without human intervention, Pagaya’s fintech automatically manages the company’s asset-backed securities (ABS)—including all trading, buying, and selling transactions—and quickly spots potentially lucrative investment opportunities. Pagaya eventually plans to apply its fintech to collateralized loan obligations (CLO) and mortgage-backed securities (MBS). Minimal oversight from Pagaya’s data scientists is led by a former managing director of BlackRock, another monopoly-esque investment corporation. Buzzwords such as “disrupt, ” “reshape, ” and “innovate” are commonly applied to descriptions of Pagaya’s fintech, similar to the ways these buzzwords are enthusiastically applied to solving inequalities in individuals’ financial access. Pagaya Investments’ CEO, Gal Krubiner, promotes the advantages of a fintech approach that “can access very unique datasets” for making “really important insights and understanding on the valuation of assets” by identifying “what is really the risk behind each individual borrower or loan.” 81 At a 2017 fintech conference held in Tel Aviv, Krubiner described how fintech could modernize the field of corporate asset management, saying, “Many institutional investors are interested in investing in online lending markets. There’s a need for new, technology-based investment tools.” 82 Pagaya’s investors include venture capitalists, hedge funds, and financial institutions such as Oak HC/FT, GF Investments, and Citi Group. 83 In an announcement that Pagaya had raised $75 million in debt finance from the financial institution Citi Group, Citi Group’s Vice President of Consumer Finance, Ari Rosenberg, stated, “This transaction is a great example of the continuing evolution of consumer credit as an asset class and growth opportunity.” 84 Any evolution introduced by Pagaya’s fintech stands to benefit monopoly-esque investment corporations and their shareholders. “Consumer credit as an asset class and growth opportunity” is the language of a financialized racial neoliberal capitalism that equates growth with progress and deploys fintech to scavenge for new, profitable income streams. Individual consumers—the people whose collateralized credit card and mortgage debts are commodified and securitized to form these asset classes—do not see the profits that fintech generates from these new income streams. People are exploited by these processes, where algorithms scrape as much information on an individual as possible to be employed in risk models for generating profits that the individual will never receive. 85 Quickly and quietly, fintech efficiently ensconces the profits into the accounts of already-wealthy corporations and their disproportionately white shareholders. Not only can fintech concentrate wealth, the computer algorithms on which fintech is built replicate and reinforce white supremacy. 86 Evidence from online advertisements provides several examples. A study of Google advertisements reveals that searching for a person with a Black-identifying name is more likely to produce advertisements that falsely suggest the person has a criminal record. 87 Algorithms that determine whether a person is exposed to certain housing advertisements discriminate against people of color and those from lower-income backgrounds. 88 The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) filed a lawsuit against Facebook claiming that their algorithms targeting online job ads to demographic groups excluded women. 89 Netflix has come under scrutiny for its algorithms’ tailoring of promotional advertisements based on customers’ viewing histories, effectively misrepresenting movies’ mostly white casts by showing scenes with movies’ few Black actors to Black customers. 90 Just as these algorithms work to discriminate on social media platforms and streaming services, fintech algorithms calibrate the financial system to whiteness. “Our whole defining mission is to redefine this discussion of both race, gender, and the intersectionality of that as it outlays and plays with closing the digital divide and providing access to girls of color . . . having the divine skills and innate ability to create change in both their own lives and their communities.” —Kimberly Bryant, 2017 91 As it stands—and especially when controlled by white data scientists and the wealthy corporations of financialized racial neoliberal capitalism—fintech offers new and sophisticated means of exploitation and surveillance. In the era of big data and predictive algorithms, benefits do not extend to Black and Brown communities or to lower-income whites. 92 Even Google Fiber’s purportedly well-intentioned city-wide efforts reinforce rather than remedy inequalities. While reflecting on the scientific contributions of her famed father, Stephen Hawking, Lucy Hawking mused, “How good is the track record of the human race in using advances in technology for the good of ordinary people?” 93 We can’t just hope that fintech will offer a slightly better track record. Hope steeped in willful, ahistorical ignorance is insulting and dangerous. We all need and deserve dignified access to digital and financial services without having our information exploited, wealth extracted, and movements surveilled—marginalized communities especially deserve this. Let us make it so.

#### The AFF’s discourse of threats to dollar hegemony is colonial blackmail that prevents any critical interrogation of American intentions--- securitization narratives justify the worst forms of oppression and papers over historical violence.

Morefield 19, Associate Professor of Political Theory @ Oxford’s Department of Politics & International Relations (Jeanne, “Challenging Liberal Belief Edward Said and the Critical Practice of History,” Empire, Race and Global Justice, *Cambridge University Press*, pp. 194-197)

Liberal internationalists like Ignatieff, John Ikenberry, and AnneMarie Slaughter – self-identified adherents to a school of thought that claims historical origins in the international vision of Woodrow Wilson and who came to prominence following Obama’s election in 2008 – believe that the strength of their approach lies in its unique combination of abstract, liberal principles and practical, foreign policy sensibilities, what Ignatieff describes as a fusion of the “view from nowhere” with the “view from somewhere.”28 The confidence expressed by liberal internationalists that they speak more directly and realistically to global politics than do liberal theorists and global justice scholars no doubt emerges, in part, from the fact that these thinkers are often public intellectuals who straddle the worlds of academia, popular media, and the “foreign policy establishment.” Whatever their origins, the “realist” impulses of the liberal internationalists lead them to explicitly embrace – in a way that most global justice scholars do not – the permanent necessity of American military, political, and economic domination; an ideal of international order that Ikenberry describes as “liberal hegemony.”29 At base, these thinkers understand themselves as balancing between the soft realm of “professional ethicists” and the hard zone of “realist” policy-making.

Thus, while both liberal internationalists and most global justice scholars dismiss the impact of imperialism on contemporary politics, they frame that dismissal differently. In contrast to many global justice scholars, liberal internationalists usually admit that most of the existing international norms, traditions, and institutions associated with the current global order are the product of former imperial relations and the triumph of Western powers after World Wars I and II. At the same time, they insist that these norms were never, in Ignatieff’s words, “imposed from the top down by an international elite.”30 Rather, as Ikenberry puts it, after 1945, “other countries, particularly in Western Europe and later in East Asia, handed the reins of power to Washington just as Hobbes’ individuals in the state of nature first construct and then hand over power to the Leviathan.”31 In an odd torqueing of the global justice argument that history has no bearing on the constructions of ideal moral solutions to the problems of the contemporary world, liberal internationalists acknowledge the imperial and coercive origins of today’s American-led order but insist that this order is liberal nonetheless and, even when it isn’t, it is the best we can get. Moreover, their intense belief in “the idea” of America as the indispensable nation without whom “nothing gets done” compels liberal internationalists to obsessively fixate on maintaining the status quo of American power because they are convinced that this power is always the only thing standing between stability and utter chaos.32

Liberal internationalists thus share with Blake (and much global justice scholarship) both a fascination with international crises that threaten American hegemony and a fixation on the need to address these crises as quickly as possible (with no reference to history) in order to shore up global peace and security. Ignatieff’s response to the crisis in Syria is particularly illustrative of this fascination/fixation. Co-author of the R2P doctrine, Ignatieff has always insisted that the United States and Canada ought to intervene militarily in Syria for humanitarian reasons.33 By the summer of 2014, however, Ignatieff’s rhetorical urging had shifted from mild fear to the kind of full-on panic that he experienced just before the war with Iraq in 2003 when he insisted that our “contemporary situation in global politics has no precedent since the age of the later Roman emperors.”34 For Ignatieff, this was a “new world” in which, “the proclamation of a terrorist caliphate in the borderlands of Syria and Iraq” indicated that “the dissolution of the state order created by Mr. Sykes and Monsieur Picot in their treaty of 1916 is proceeding to a fiery denouement.”35

The Sykes–Picot Agreement was, of course, a secret treaty brokered by Britain and France during World War I in which these two imperial powers divided up the former Ottoman territory of the Middle East between themselves after having promised independence to the Arabs who fought with them against the Axis powers. Sykes–Picot, and eventually the Mandated territories that resulted from it, transformed this corner of the Ottoman empire into one of most volatile regions of the world through the creation of new borders, the installation of puppet leaders, the rampant extraction of oil, the violent repression of civilian populations – sometimes, as with the British Mandate in Iraq, through the use of chemical weapons – and the promotion of religious and ethnic distinctions and hierarchies that remain to this day. The states it created were never stable and were often purposely destabilized by France, Britain, and the United States throughout the coming century.36 The order it secured served no one’s purpose aside from those global world powers intent on oil extraction and the anti-democratic leaders they supported, and the kind of Arab Nationalism it engendered was often state-centered and militaristic. Ignatieff’s conviction that this “order” was preferable to anything else speaks volumes. His is an international vision rooted in a reactive attachment to an American-led status quo that is imperial in all but name, that is always the only thing standing between stability and chaos, and that must be protected through urgent intervention in the sovereign politics of putatively nonliberal states.

This presentist fixation with preserving order because the alternative to American hegemony is always worse stops inquiry in its tracts and demands action, action that, in Said’s words, usually entails “more destruction and death for distant civilizations.”37 There is never time in a disordered world on the brink of catastrophe to reflect on the nature of Sykes–Picot, to stop and think seriously about the history of power lurking behind the looming crisis. Rather, in the minds of liberal internationalists, America is both the hegemonic power that sews together the strands of liberal civilization in a disordered world and perennially in peril.38 This temporally compressed vision reduces the aspirations of all the people in a region as fraught with recent imperial history as the Middle East to a feedback loop of order versus disorder that inadvertently strips democratic protestors, rebel fighters, stateless civilians, children, ethnic minorities, soldiers, and refugees alike of historical context and lived experience. By this logic, if the end of American hegemony signifies the end of the world, any narrative that calls the good intentions of that hegemon into question – whether that narrative issues from anticolonial theorists, “hostile revisionist powers,” or Donald Trump himself – becomes complicit in a project that can only end in Armageddon.39

#### Western fear of prolif is a hypocritical colonial logic that perpetuates violence

Alex Chung 14, MA in International Relations (IR) from the University of New South Wales (UNSW) in Sydney, Australia; “Postcolonial Perspectives on Nuclear NonProliferation”; Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, University of Texas, Austin, Conference Paper for the ISAC-ISSS Joint Annual Conference 2014 14-16 November; <http://web.isanet.org/Web/Conferences/ISSS%20Austin%202014/Archive/44aedf1a-f8b9-49ad-8411-1d43fecbd202.pdf>

Security studies have traditionally been concerned with relations between ‘great powers’, within a hierarchy of stronger and weaker sovereign territorial states (Barkawi & Laffey 2006, p. 329). The field of security politics has largely been ignorant [sic] to and disregarded the security needs and interests of ‘small’ or ‘weak’ states by conceptualising security primarily around the organisation of ‘great power’ politics, underpinned by Eurocentric and racist assumptions (Biswas, forthcoming 2012). “Security studies is by and for Western powers,” (Barkawi & Laffey 2006, p. 344). There exists a rather limited awareness in international relations (IR) of ‘non-Western’ perspectives on global politics, thus constructing what Ken Booth remarked as IR’s “ethnocentric, masculinised, northern and top-down” formulation (Bilgin 2008, p. 6- 7). Within the international system, “the taken-for-granted historical geographies that underpin security systematically understate and misrepresent the role of what we now call the global South in security relations,” (Barkawi & Laffey 2006, p. 330). Western constituted social science and humanities have largely ignored the impact of the postcolonial agenda and the Global South and on international norms and practices (Grovogui 2011, p. 178). Agency is presumed to be in the hands of the ‘great powers’ and western political perspectives are constructed as and considered to be the pinnacle of international norms (Barkawi & Laffey 2006, p. 340). This paper seeks to approach the question of nuclear security and nuclear nonproliferation from the perspective of those states that see themselves as marginalised by an unequal global security architecture, and demonstrate how the current nuclear nonproliferation regime perpetuates logics of Eurocentric and colonial violence and inequity. Nuclear weapons were introduced to the world over 65 years ago by the United States with the purpose of winning a war against the Axis powers of Japan and Germany (Daadler & Lodal 2008, p. 80). The destructive nature of nuclear weapons presents a tremendous existential threat to the safety and security of the world. In the words of Rajiv Gandhi, addressing the UN General Assembly on 9 June 1988, “Nuclear war will not mean the death of a hundred million people. Or even a thousand million. It will mean the extinction of four thousand million: the end of life as we know it on our planet earth,” (Shultz et al. 2007, p. 2). Accordingly, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) envisioned the end of nuclear weapons, as the most universally accepted arms control agreement with 189 state members, by recognising five Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) – the US, Russia, China, France, and Britain (Peterson 2010). In return for the promise by all NWS states to completely disarm, and assistance in the acquisition of civilian nuclear energy technology, all Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NNWS) forever forego obtaining nuclear weapons, thereby preventing horizontal proliferation with the stated goal of complete global nuclear disarmament (Gusterson 1999, p. 113). It is significant to note that international institutions such as the UN and the nuclear non-proliferation regime “are largely the product of interstate diplomacy dominated by Western great powers,” (Barkawi & Laffey 2006, p. 331). The five NWS states also hold the five permanent member seats on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), leading some to criticise the NPT for legitimising and institutionalising nuclear power at the hands of the very few, and at the same time prohibiting the pursuit of nuclear security by the rest of the world (Biswas 2001, p. 486; Biswas, forthcoming 2012). While there have been symbolic reductions in the nuclear stockpiles of the NWS states via bilateral and multilateral treaties, the indefinite and unconditional extension of the NPT in 1995 continues to legitimise the existence of nuclear weapons in the hands of the NWS/P-5, allowing them to modernise their nuclear arsenals, and engage in vertical nuclear proliferation without interference from the international community (Singh 1998, p. 41). The exclusive nature of the NPT and the alignment of NWS status with the UNSC P-5 is indicative of an international regime that perpetuates logics of colonial violence, oppression, and inequity as represented by the emblematic clash between nuclear “haves” and nuclear “have-nots” (Biswas 2001, p. 486; Peterson 2010). As such, the institutionalised demarcation of NWS and NNWS states has led to accusations of “nuclear apartheid” (Biswas 2001, p. 486; Singh 1998, p. 48). Put simply, “nuclear apartheid” highlights the material inequalities in the distribution of global nuclear resources – “inequities that are written into, institutionalised, and legitimised through some of the major arms-control treaties, creating an elite club of nuclear ‘haves’ with exclusive rights to maintain nuclear arsenals that are to be denied to the vast majority of nuclear ‘have nots’,” (Biswas 2001, p. 486). This is evidenced by the United States having “worked diligently to preserve its nuclear supremacy” since 1945; by attempting to keep the nuclear “secret” in perpetuity, by limiting America’s European allies’ ability to command atomic weapons independently, and endeavouring, unsuccessfully, to keep the Middle East and South Asia free of nuclear weapons (Maddock cited in Rotter 2011, p. 1175). Resistance to Northern domination of the international system is often delegitimised by the West, leading to labels such as ‘rogue states’ or ‘terrorism’. The term ‘rogue state’ is used in political science literature to describe, “a class of states that combines the seeming irrationality and fanaticism of terror groups with the military assets of states,” (Rose 2011, p. 1). ‘Rogue states’ are presumed to lack rationality, presenting a significant and unpredictable danger, as a result of “underlying presumed bad intent of its leadership,” (Smith 2000, p. 119). “The claim to rational decision-making is frequently used by great powers to justify the possession of nuclear weapons. Conversely, the purported lack of rationality on the part of other states, particularly revolutionary regimes like Cuba or Iran, is routinely invoked to explain why they cannot be trusted with nuclear weapons,” (Barkawi & Laffey 2006, p. 338). This is coupled with the common perception in the West that, “while we can live with the nuclear weapons of the five official nuclear nations for the indefinite future, the proliferation of nuclear weapons to nuclear-threshold states in the Third World, especially the Islamic world, would be enormously dangerous,” (Gusterson 1999, p. 112).

#### American exceptionalism outweighs and turns case---the U.S. is the greatest threat to peace globally.

Street 18, PhD in History from Binghamton University (Paul, February 20th, “The World Will Not Mourn the Decline of U.S. Hegemony,” *Truth Dig*, <https://www.truthdig.com/articles/world-will-not-mourn-decline-u-s-hegemony/>, Accessed 11-26-2021)

For the purposes of this report, I’ll leave aside the matter of whether Trump is, in fact, speeding the decline of US global power (he undoubtedly is) and how he’s doing that to focus instead on a very different question: What would be so awful about the end of “the American Era”—the seven-plus decades of US global economic and related military supremacy between 1945 and the present? Why should the world mourn the “premature” end of the “American Century”?

It would be interesting to see a reliable opinion poll on how the politically cognizant portion of the 94 percent of humanity that lives outside the US would feel about the end of US global dominance. My guess is that Uncle Sam’s weakening would be just fine with most Earth residents who pay attention to world events.

According to a global survey of 66,000 people conducted across 68 countries by the Worldwide Independent Network of Market Research (WINMR) and Gallup International at the end of 2013, Earth’s people see the United States as the leading threat to peace on the planet. The US was voted top threat by a wide margin.

There is nothing surprising about that vote for anyone who honestly examines the history of “US foreign affairs,” to use a common elite euphemism for American imperialism. Still, by far and away world history’s most extensive empire, the US has at least 800 military bases spread across more than 80 foreign countries and “troops or other military personnel in about 160 foreign countries and territories.” The US accounts for more than 40 percent of the planet’s military spending and has more than 5,500 strategic nuclear weapons, enough to blow the world up 5 to 50 times over. Last year it increased its “defense” (military empire) spending, which was already three times higher than China’s, and nine times higher than Russia’s.

Think it’s all in place to ensure peace and democracy the world over, in accord with the standard boilerplate rhetoric of US presidents, diplomats and senators?

Do you know any other good jokes?

A Pentagon study released last summer laments the emergence of a planet on which the US no longer controls events. Titled At Our Own Peril: DoD Risk Assessment in a Post-Primary World, the study warns that competing powers “seek a new distribution of power and authority commensurate with their emergence as legitimate rivals to US dominance” in an increasingly multipolar world. China, Russia and smaller players like Iran and North Korea have dared to “engage,” the Pentagon study reports, “in a deliberate program to demonstrate the limits of US authority, reach influence and impact.” What chutzpah! This is a problem, the report argues, because the endangered US-managed world order was “favorable” to the interests of US and allied US states and US-based transnational corporations.

Any serious efforts to redesign the international status quo so that it favors any other states or people is portrayed in the report as a threat to US interests. To prevent any terrible drifts of the world system away from US control, the report argues, the US and its imperial partners (chiefly its European NATO partners) must maintain and expand “unimpeded access to the air, sea, space, cyberspace, and the electromagnetic spectrum in order to underwrite their security and prosperity.” The report recommends a significant expansion of US military power. The US must maintain “military advantage” over all other states and actors to “preserve maximum freedom of action” and thereby “allow US decision-makers the opportunity to dictate or hold significant sway over outcomes in international disputes,” with the “implied promise of unacceptable consequences” for those who defy US wishes.

“America First” is an understatement here. The underlying premise is that Uncle Sam owns the world and reserves the right to bomb the hell out of anyone who doesn’t agree with that (to quote President George H.W. Bush after the first Gulf War in 1991: “What we say goes.”

It’s nothing new. From the start, the “American Century” had nothing to do with advancing democracy. As numerous key US planning documents reveal over and over, the goal of that policy was to maintain and, if necessary, install governments that “favor[ed] private investment of domestic and foreign capital, production for export, and the right to bring profits out of the country,” according to Noam Chomsky. Given the United States’ remarkable possession of half the world’s capital after World War II, Washington elites had no doubt that US investors and corporations would profit the most. Internally, the basic selfish national and imperial objectives were openly and candidly discussed. As the “liberal” and “dovish” imperialist, top State Department planner, and key Cold War architect George F. Kennan explained in Policy Planning Study 23, a critical 1948 document:

We have about 50% of the world’s wealth, but only 6.3% of its population. … In this situation, we cannot fail to be the object of envy and resentment. Our real task in the coming period is to devise a pattern of relationships which will permit us to maintain this position of disparity. … To do so, we will have to dispense with all sentimentality and day-dreaming; and our attention will have to be concentrated everywhere on our immediate national objectives. … We should cease to talk about vague and … unreal objectives such as human rights, the raising of the living standards, and democratization. The day is not far off when we are going to have to deal in straight power concepts. The less we are then hampered by idealistic slogans, the better.

The harsh necessity of abandoning “human rights” and other “sentimental” and “unreal objectives” was especially pressing in the global South, what used to be known as the Third World. Washington assigned the vast “undeveloped” periphery of the world capitalist system—Africa, Latin America, Southeast Asia and the energy-rich and thus strategically hyper-significant Middle East—a less than flattering role. It was to “fulfill its major function as a source of raw materials and a market” (actual State Department language) for the great industrial (capitalist) nations (excluding socialist Russia and its satellites, and notwithstanding the recent epic racist-fascist rampages of industrial Germany and Japan). It was to be exploited both for the benefit of US corporations/investors and for the reconstruction of Europe and Japan as prosperous US trading and investment partners organized on capitalist principles and hostile to the Soviet bloc.

“Democracy” was fine as a slogan and benevolent, idealistic-sounding mission statement when it came to marketing this imperialist US policy at home and abroad. Since most people in the “third” or “developing” world had no interest in neocolonial subordination to the rich nations and subscribed to what US intelligence officials considered the heretical “idea that government has direct responsibility for the welfare of its people” (what US planners called “communism”), Washington’s real-life commitment to popular governance abroad was strictly qualified, to say the least. “Democracy” was suitable to the US as long as its outcomes comported with the interests of US investors/corporations and related US geopolitical objectives. It had to be abandoned, undermined and/or crushed when it threatened those investors/corporations and the broader imperatives of business rule to any significant degree. As President Richard Nixon’s coldblooded national security adviser Henry Kissinger explained in June 1970, three years before the US sponsored a bloody fascist coup that overthrew Chile’s democratically elected socialist president, Salvador Allende: “I don’t see why we need to stand by and watch a country go Communist because of the irresponsibility of its own people.”

The US-sponsored coup government that murdered Allende would kill tens of thousands of real and alleged leftists with Washington’s approval. The Yankee superpower sent some of its leading neoliberal economists and policy advisers to help the blood-soaked Pinochet regime turn Chile into a “free market” model and to help Chile write capitalist oligarchy into its national constitution.

“Since 1945, by deed and by example,” the great Australian author, commentator and filmmaker John Pilger wrote nearly nine years ago: “The US has overthrown 50 governments, including democracies, crushed some 30 liberation movements and supported tyrannies from Egypt to Guatemala (see William Blum’s histories). Bombing is apple pie.” Along the way, Washington has crassly interfered in elections in dozens of “sovereign” nations, something curious to note in light of current liberal US outrage over real or alleged Russian interference in “our” supposedly democratic electoral process in 2016. Uncle Sam also has bombed civilians in 30 countries, attempted to assassinate foreign leaders and deployed chemical and biological weapons.

If we “consider only Latin America since the 1950s,” writes the sociologist Howard Waitzkin:

[T]he United States has used direct military invasion or has supported military coups to overthrow elected governments in Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Chile, Haiti, Grenada, and Panama. In addition, the United States has intervened with military action to suppress revolutionary movements in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Bolivia. More recently … the United States has spent tax dollars to finance and help organize opposition groups and media in Honduras, Paraguay, and Brazil, leading to congressional impeachments of democratically elected presidents. Hillary Clinton presided over these efforts as Secretary of State in the Obama administration, which pursued the same pattern of destabilization in Venezuela, Ecuador, Argentina, Chile, and Bolivia.

The death count resulting from “American Era” US foreign policy runs well into the many millions, including possibly as many as 5 million Indochinese killed by Uncle Sam and his agents and allies between 1962 and 1975. The flat-out barbarism of the American war on Vietnam is widely documented on record. The infamous My Lai massacre of March 16, 1968, when US Army soldiers slaughtered more than 350 unarmed civilians—including terrified women holding babies in their arms—in South Vietnam was no isolated incident in the US “crucifixion of Southeast Asia” (Noam Chomsky’s phrase at the time). US Army Col. Oran Henderson, who was charged with covering up the massacre, candidly told reporters that “every unit of brigade size has its My Lai hidden somewhere.”

It is difficult, sometimes, to wrap one’s mind around the extent of the savagery Uncle Sam has unleashed on the world to advance and maintain its global supremacy. In the early 1950s, the Harry Truman administration responded to an early challenge to US power in Northern Korea with a practically genocidal three-year bombing campaign that was described in soul-numbing terms by the Washington Post years ago:

The bombing was long, leisurely and merciless, even by the assessment of America’s own leaders. ‘Over a period of three years or so, we killed off—what—20 percent of the population,’ Air Force Gen. Curtis LeMay, head of the Strategic Air Command during the Korean War, told the Office of Air Force History in 1984. Dean Rusk, a supporter of the war and later Secretary of State, said the United States bombed ‘everything that moved in North Korea, every brick standing on top of another.’ After running low on urban targets, US bombers destroyed hydroelectric and irrigation dams in the later stages of the war, flooding farmland and destroying crops … [T]he US dropped 635,000 tons of explosives on North Korea, including 32,557 tons of napalm, an incendiary liquid that can clear forested areas and cause devastating burns to human skin.

Gee, why does North Korea fear and hate Uncle Sam?

This ferocious bombardment, which killed 2 million or more civilians, began five years after Truman arch-criminally and unnecessarily ordered the atom bombing of hundreds of thousands pf civilians in Hiroshima and Nagasaki to warn the Soviet Union to stay out of Japan and Western Europe.

Some benevolent “world policeman.”

The ferocity of US foreign policy in “America Era” did not always require direct US military intervention. Take Indonesia and Chile, for two examples from the “Golden Age” height of the “American Century.” In Indonesia, the US-backed dictator Suharto killed millions

of his subjects, targeting communist sympathizers, ethnic Chinese and alleged leftists. A senior CIA operations officer in the 1960s later described Suharto’s 1965-66 US-assisted coup as s “the model operation” for the US-backed coup that eliminated the democratically elected president of Chile, Salvador Allende, seven years later. “The CIA forged a document purporting to reveal a leftist plot to murder Chilean military leaders,” the officer wrote, “[just like] what happened in Indonesia in 1965.”

As John Pilger noted 10 years ago, “the US embassy in Jakarta supplied Suharto with a ‘zap list’ of Indonesian Communist party members and crossed off the names when they were killed or captured. … The deal was that Indonesia under Suharto would offer up what Richard Nixon had called ‘the richest hoard of natural resources, the greatest prize in south-east Asia.’ ”

“No single American action in the period after 1945,” wrote the historian Gabriel Kolko, “was as bloodthirsty as its role in Indonesia, for it tried to initiate [Suharto’s] massacre.”

Two years and three months after the Chilean coup, Suharto received a green light from Kissinger and the Gerald Ford White House to invade the small island nation of East Timor. With Washington’s approval and backing, Indonesia carried out genocidal massacres and mass rapes and killed at least 100,000 of the island’s residents.

Among the countless episodes of mass-murderous US savagery in the oil-rich Middle East over the last generation, few can match for the barbarous ferocity of the “Highway of Death,” where the “global policeman’s” forces massacred tens of thousands of surrendered Iraqi troops retreating from Kuwait on Feb. 26 and 27, 1991. Journalist Joyce Chediac testified that:

US planes trapped the long convoys by disabling vehicles in the front, and at the rear, and then pounded the resulting traffic jams for hours. ‘It was like shooting fish in a barrel,’ said one US pilot. On the sixty miles of coastal highway, Iraqi military units sit in gruesome repose, scorched skeletons of vehicles and men alike, black and awful under the sun … for 60 miles every vehicle was strafed or bombed, every windshield is shattered, every tank is burned, every truck is riddled with shell fragments. No survivors are known or likely. … ‘Even in Vietnam I didn’t see anything like this. It’s pathetic,’ said Major Bob Nugent, an Army intelligence officer. … US pilots took whatever bombs happened to be close to the flight deck, from cluster bombs to 500-pound bombs. … US forces continued to drop bombs on the convoys until all humans were killed. So many jets swarmed over the inland road that it created an aerial traffic jam, and combat air controllers feared midair collisions. … The victims were not offering resistance. … It was simply a one-sided massacre of tens of thousands of people who had no ability to fight back or defend.

The victims’ crime was having been conscripted into an army controlled by a dictator perceived as a threat to US control of Middle Eastern oil. President George H.W. Bush welcomed the so-called Persian Gulf War as an opportunity to demonstrate America’s unrivaled power and new freedom of action in the post-Cold War world, where the Soviet Union could no longer deter Washington. Bush also heralded the “war” (really a one-sided imperial assault) as marking the end of the “Vietnam Syndrome,” the reigning political culture’s curious term for US citizens’ reluctance to commit US troops to murderous imperial mayhem.

As Noam Chomsky observed in 1992, reflecting on US efforts to maximize suffering in Vietnam by blocking economic and humanitarian assistance to the nation it had devastated: “No degree of cruelty is too great for Washington sadists.”

But Uncle Sam was only getting warmed up building his Iraqi body count in early 1991. Five years later, Bill Clinton’s US Secretary of State Madeline Albright told CBS News’ Leslie Stahl that the death of 500,000 Iraqi children due to US-led economic sanctions imposed after the first “Persian Gulf War” (a curious term for a one-sided US assault) was a “price … worth paying” for the advancement of inherently noble US goals.

“The United States,” Secretary Albright explained three years later, “is good. We try to do our best everywhere.”

In the years following the collapse of the counter-hegemonic Soviet empire, however, American neoliberal intellectuals like Thomas Friedman—an advocate of the criminal US bombing of Serbia—felt free to openly state that the real purpose of US foreign policy was to underwrite the profits of US-centered global capitalism. “The hidden hand of the market,” Friedman famously wrote in The New York Times Magazine in March 1999, as US bombs and missiles exploded in Serbia, “will never work without a hidden fist. McDonald’s cannot flourish without McDonnell Douglas, the designer of the F-15. And the hidden fist that keeps the world safe for Silicon Valley’s technologies to flourish is called the US Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps.”

In a foreign policy speech Sen. Barack Obama gave to the Chicago Council of Global Affairs on the eve of announcing his candidacy for the US presidency in the fall of 2006, Obama had the audacity to say the following in support of his claim that US citizens supported “victory” in Iraq: “The American people have been extraordinarily resolved. They have seen their sons and daughters killed or wounded in the streets of Fallujah.”

It was a spine-chilling selection of locales. In 2004, the ill-fated city was the site of colossal US war atrocities, crimes including the indiscriminate murder of thousands of civilians, the targeting even of ambulances and hospitals, and the practical leveling of an entire city by the US military in April and November. By one account, Incoherent Empire, Michael Mann wrote:

The US launched two bursts of ferocious assault on the city, in April and November of 2004 … [using] devastating firepower from a distance which minimizes US casualties. In April … military commanders claimed to have precisely targeted … insurgent forces, yet the local hospitals reported that many or most of the casualties were civilians, often women, children, and the elderly… [reflecting an] intention to kill civilians generally. … In November … [US] aerial assault destroyed the only hospital in insurgent territory to ensure that this time no one would be able to document civilian casualties. US forces then went through the city, virtually destroying it. Afterwards, Fallujah looked like the city of Grozny in Chechnya after Putin’s Russian troops had razed it to the ground.

The “global policeman’s” deployment of radioactive ordnance (depleted uranium) in Fallujah created an epidemic of infant mortality, birth defects, leukemia and cancer there.

Fallujah was just one especially graphic episode in a broader arch-criminal invasion that led to the premature deaths of at least 1 million Iraqi civilians and left Iraq as what Tom Engelhardt called “a disaster zone on a catastrophic scale hard to match in recent memory.” It reflected the same callous mindset behind the Pentagon’s early computer program name for ordinary Iraqis certain to be killed in the 2003 invasion: “bug-splat.” Uncle Sam’s petro-imperial occupation led to the death of at least 1 million Iraqi “bugs” (human beings). According to the respected journalist Nir Rosen in December 2007, “Iraq has been killed. … [T]he American occupation has been more disastrous than that of the Mongols who sacked Baghdad in the thirteenth century.”

Along with death came the ruthless and racist torture. In an essay titled “I Helped Create ISIS,” Vincent Emanuele, a former US Marine, recalled his enlistment in an operation that gave him nightmares more than a decade later:

I think about the hundreds of prisoners we took captive and tortured in makeshift detention facilities. … I vividly remember the marines telling me about punching, slapping, kicking, elbowing, kneeing and head-butting Iraqis. I remember the tales of sexual torture: forcing Iraqi men to perform sexual acts on each other while marines held knives against their testicles, sometimes sodomizing them with batons. … [T]hose of us in infantry units … round[ed] up Iraqis during night raids, zip-tying their hands, black-bagging their heads and throwing them in the back of HUMVEEs and trucks while their wives and kids collapsed to their knees and wailed. … Some of them would hold hands while marines would butt-stroke the prisoners in the face. … [W]hen they were released, we would drive them from the FOB (Forward Operating Base) to the middle of the desert and release them several miles from their homes. … After we cut their zip-ties and took the black bags off their heads, several of our more deranged marines would fire rounds from their AR-15s into their air or ground, scaring the recently released captives. Always for laughs. Most Iraqis would run, still crying from their long ordeal.

The award-winning journalist Seymour Hersh told the ACLU about the existence of classified Pentagon evidence files containing films of U.S-“global policeman” soldiers sodomizing Iraqi boys in front of their mothers behind the walls of the notorious Abu Ghraib prison. “You haven’t begun to see [all the] … evil, horrible things done [by US soldiers] to children of women prisoners, as the cameras run,” Hersh told an audience in Chicago in the summer of 2014.

It isn’t just Iraq where Washington has wreaked sheer mass murderous havoc in the Middle East, always a region of prime strategic significance to the US thanks to its massive petroleum resources. In a recent Truthdig reflection on Syria, historian Dan Lazare reminds us that:

[Syrian President Assad’s] Baathist crimes pale in comparison to those of the US, which since the 1970s has invested trillions in militarizing the Persian Gulf and arming the ultra-reactionary petro-monarchies that are now tearing the region apart. The US has provided Saudi Arabia with crucial assistance in its war on Yemen, it has cheered on the Saudi blockade of Qatar, and it has stood by while the Saudis and United Arab Emirates send in troops to crush democratic protests in neighboring Bahrain. In Syria, Washington has worked hand in glove with Riyadh to organize and finance a Wahhabist holy war that has reduced a once thriving country to ruin.

Chomsky has called Barack Obama’s targeted drone assassination program “the most extensive global terrorism campaign the world has yet seen.” The program “officially is aimed at killing people who the administration believes might someday intend to harm the US and killing anyone else who happens to be nearby.” As Chomsky adds, “It is also a terrorism generating campaign—that is well understood by people in high places. When you murder somebody in a Yemen village, and maybe a couple of other people who are standing there, the chances are pretty high that others will want to take revenge.”

“We lead the world,” presidential candidate Obama explained, “in battling immediate evils and promoting the ultimate good. … America is the last, best hope of earth.”

Obama elaborated in his first inaugural address. “Our security,” the president said, “emanates from the justness of our cause; the force of our example; the tempering qualities of humility and restraint”—a fascinating commentary on Fallujah, Hiroshima, the US crucifixion of Southeast Asia, the “Highway of Death” and more.

Within less than half a year of his inauguration, Obama’s rapidly accumulating record of atrocities in the Muslim world would include the bombing of the Afghan village of Bola Boluk. Ninety-three of the dead villagers torn apart by US explosives in Bola Boluk were children. “In a phone call played on a loudspeaker on Wednesday to outraged members of the Afghan Parliament,” the New York Times reported, “the governor of Farah Province … said that as many as 130 civilians had been killed.” According to one Afghan legislator and eyewitness, “the villagers bought two tractor trailers full of pieces of human bodies to his office to prove the casualties that had occurred. Everyone at the governor’s cried, watching that shocking scene.” The administration refused to issue an apology or to acknowledge the “global policeman’s” responsibility.

By telling and sickening contrast, Obama had just offered a full apology and fired a White House official because that official had scared New Yorkers with an ill-advised Air Force One photo-shoot flyover of Manhattan that reminded people of 9/11. The disparity was extraordinary: Frightening New Yorkers led to a full presidential apology and the discharge of a White House staffer. Killing more than 100 Afghan civilians did not require any apology.

Reflecting on such atrocities the following December, an Afghan villager was moved to comment as follows: “Peace prize? He’s a killer. … Obama has only brought war to our country.” The man spoke from the village of Armal, where a crowd of 100 gathered around the bodies of 12 people, one family from a single home. The 12 were killed, witnesses reported, by US Special Forces during a late-night raid.

Obama was only warming up his “killer” powers. He would join with France and other NATO powers in the imperial decimation of Libya, which killed more than 25,000 civilians and unleashed mass carnage in North Africa. The US-led assault on Libya was a disaster for black Africans and sparked the biggest refugee crisis since World War II.

Two years before the war on Libya, the Obama administration helped install a murderous right-wing coup regime in Honduras. Thousands of civilians and activists have been murdered by that regime.

The clumsy and stupid Trump has taken the imperial baton from the elegant and silver-tongued “imperial grandmaster” Obama, keeping the superpower’s vast global military machine set on kill. As Newsweek reported last fall, in a news item that went far below the national news radar screen in the age of the endless insane Trump clown show:

According to research from the nonprofit monitoring group Airwars … through the first seven months of the Trump administration, coalition air strikes have killed between 2,800 and 4,500 civilians. … Researchers also point to another stunning trend—the ‘frequent killing of entire families in likely coalition airstrikes.’ In May, for example, such actions led to the deaths of at least 57 women and 52 children in Iraq and Syria. … In Afghanistan, the U.N. reports a 67 percent increase in civilian deaths from US airstrikes in the first six months of 2017 compared to the first half of 2016.

That Trump murders with less sophistication, outward moral restraint and credible claim to embody enlightened Western values and multilateral commitment than Obama did is perhaps preferable to some degree. It is better for empire to be exposed in its full and ugly nakedness, to speed its overdue demise.

The US is not just the top menace only to peace on Earth. It is also the leading threat to personal privacy (as was made clearer than ever by the Edward Snowden revelations), to democracy (the US funds and equips repressive regimes around the world) and to a livable global natural environment (thanks in no small part to its role as headquarters of global greenhouse gassing and petro-capitalist climate denial).

The world can be forgiven, perhaps, if it does not join Eliot Cohen and Karl Vick in bemoaning the end of the “American Era,” whatever Trump’s contribution to that decline, which was well underway before he entered the Oval Office.

Ordinary Americans, too, can find reasons to welcome the decline of the American empire. As Chomsky noted in the late 1960s: “The costs of empire are in general distributed over the society as a whole, while its profits revert to a few within.”

The Pentagon system functions as a great form of domestic corporate welfare for high-tech “defense” (empire) firms like Lockheed Martin, Boeing and Raytheon—this while it steals trillions of dollars that might otherwise meet social and environmental needs at home and abroad. It is a significant mode of upward wealth distribution within “the homeland.”

The biggest costs have fallen on the many millions killed and maimed by the US military and allied and proxy forces in the last seven decades and before. The victims include the many US military veterans who have killed themselves, many of them haunted by their own participation in sadistic attacks and torture on defenseless people at the distant command of sociopathic imperial masters determined to enforce US hegemony by any and all means deemed necessary.

#### The alternative is insurgent memory---analyzing the aff’s militaristic narratives is necessary to reclaim the university from the Military-Industrial Complex as a site of struggle that can fuel radical global movements.

Giroux 15, McMaster University Chair for Scholarship in the Public Interest & The Paulo Freire Distinguished Scholar in Critical Pedagogy (Henry, March 3rd, “Higher Education and the Promise of Insurgent Public Memory,” *Truthout*, <https://truthout.org/articles/higher-education-and-the-promise-of-insurgent-public-memory/>, Accessed 1-20-2022)

While the post-9/11 attacks have taken an even more dangerous turn, higher education is still a site of intense struggle, but it is fair to say the right wing is winning. The success of the financial elite in waging this war can be measured not only by the rise in the stranglehold of neoliberal policies over higher education, the increasing corporatization of the university, the evisceration of full-time, tenured jobs for faculty, the dumbing down of the curriculum, the view of students as customers, and the growing influence of the military-industrial-academic complex in the service of the financial elite, but also in the erasing of public memory. Memory is no longer insurgent; that is, it has been erased as a critical educational and political optic for moral witnessing, testimony and civic courage. On the contrary, it is either being cleansed or erased by the new apologists for the status quo who urge people to love the United States, which means giving up any sense of counter memory, interrogation of dominant narratives or retrieval of lost histories of struggle.

The current call to cleanse history in the name of a false patriotism that celebrates a new illiteracy as a way of loving the United States is a discourse of anti-memory, a willful attempt at forgetting the past in the manufactured fog of historical amnesia. This is particularly true when it comes to erasing the work of a number of critical intellectuals who have written about higher education as the practice of freedom, including John Dewey, George S. Counts, W.E.B. Du Bois, the Social Reconstructionists, and others, all of whom viewed higher education as integral to the development of both engaged critical citizens and the university as a democratic public sphere. (19)

Under the reign of neoliberalism, with few exceptions, higher education appears to be increasingly decoupling itself from its historical legacy as a crucial public sphere, responsible for both educating students for the workplace and providing them with the modes of critical discourse, interpretation, judgment, imagination, and experiences that deepen and expand democracy. As universities adopt the ideology of the transnational corporation and become subordinated to the needs of capital, the war industries and the Pentagon, they are less concerned about how they might educate students about the ideology and civic practices of democratic governance and the necessity of using knowledge to address the challenges of public life. (20) Instead, as part of the post-9/11 military-industrial-academic complex, higher education increasingly conjoins military interests and market values, identities and social relations while the role of the university as a public good, a site of critical dialogue and a place that calls students to think, question, learn how to take risks, and act with compassion and conviction is dismissed as impractical or subversive. (21)

The corporatization, militarization and dumbing down of rigorous scholarship, and the devaluing of the critical capacities of young people mark a sharp break from a once influential educational tradition in the United States, extending from Thomas Jefferson to John Dewey to Maxine Greene, who held that freedom flourishes in the worldly space of the public realm only through the work of educated, critical citizens. Within this democratic tradition, education was not confused with training; instead, its critical function was propelled by the need to provide students with the knowledge and skills that enable a “politically interested and mobilized citizenry, one that has certain solidarities, is capable of acting on its own behalf, and anticipates a future of ever greater social equality across lines of race, gender, and class.” (22) Other prominent educators and theorists such as Hannah Arendt, James B. Conant and Cornelius Castoriadis have long believed and rightly argued that we should not allow education to be modeled after the business world. Dewey, in particular, warned about the growing influence of the “corporate mentality” and the threat that the business model posed to public spaces, higher education and democracy. He argued:

The business mind, having its own conversation and language, its own interests, its own intimate groupings in which men of this mind, in their collective capacity, determine the tone of society at large as well as the government of industrial society…. We now have, although without formal or legal status, a mental and moral corporateness for which history affords no parallel. (23)

Dewey and the other public intellectuals mentioned above shared a common vision and project of rethinking what role education might play in providing students with the habits of mind and ways of acting that would enable them to “identify and probe the most serious threats and dangers that democracy faces in a global world dominated by instrumental and technological thinking.” (24) Conant, a former president of Harvard University, argued that higher education should create a class of “American radicals,” who could fight for equality, favor public education, elevate human needs over property rights and challenge “groups which have attained too much power.” (25) Conant’s views seem so radical today that it is hard to imagine him being hired as a university president at Harvard or any other institution of higher learning.

All of these intellectuals offered a notion of the university as a bastion of democratic learning and values that provide a crucial referent in exploring the more specific question regarding what form will be taken by the relationship between corporations and higher education in the 21st century. It now seems naive to assume that corporations, left to their own devices, would view higher education as more than merely a training center for future business employees, a franchise for generating profits or a space in which corporate culture and education merge in order to produce literate consumers.

US higher education is increasingly more divided into those institutions educating the elite to rule the world in the 21st century and second-tier and third-tier institutions that largely train students for low-paid positions in the capitalist world economy. It is increasingly apparent that the university in the United States has become a social institution that not only fails to address inequality in society, but also contributes to a growing division between social classes. At the same time, it has become a class and racial sorting machine constructing impenetrable financial and policy boundaries that serve as workstations to produce updated forms of economic and racial Darwinism. Moreover, as tuition exceeds the budgets of most Americans, quality education at public and private universities becomes primarily a privilege reserved for the children of the rich and powerful. While researchers attempt to reform a “broken” federal student financial aid system, there is “growing evidence … that the United States is slipping (to 10th now among industrialized countries) in the proportion of young adults who attain some postsecondary education.” (26)

Higher education has a responsibility not only to be available and accessible to all youth, but also to educate young people to make authority politically and morally accountable and to expand both academic freedom and the possibility and promise of the university as a bastion of democratic inquiry, values and politics, even as these are necessarily refashioned at the beginning of the new millennium. Questions regarding whether the university should serve public rather than private interests no longer carry the weight of forceful criticism as they did when raised by Thorstein Veblen, Robert Lynd and C. Wright Mills in the first part of the 20th century. Yet, such questions are still crucial in addressing the reality of higher education and what it might mean to imagine the university’s full participation in public life as the protector and promoter of democratic values among the next generation. This is especially true at a time when the meaning and purpose of higher education is under assault by a phalanx of right-wing forces attempting to slander, even vilify, liberal and left-oriented professors, cut already meager federal funding for higher education, and place control of what is taught and said in classrooms under legislative oversight. (27)

While the US university faces a growing number of problems that range from the increasing loss of federal and state funding to the incursion of corporate power, a galloping commercialization and the growing influence of the national security state, it is also currently being targeted by conservative politicians that have hijacked political power and waged a focused campaign against the principles of academic freedom, sacrificing the quality of education made available to youth in the name of patriotic correctness and dismantling the university as a site of critical pedagogical practice, autonomous scholarship, independent thought and uncorrupted inquiry.

For instance, right-wing politicians, such as Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker, unapologetically denounce the university as a threat to the success of market forces and go out of their way to defund its operating budget. In this case, Walker recently announced that he was slashing $300 million from the Wisconsin public university system’s budget over a two-year period. At the same time, he announced that he is requesting $500 million to build a basketball arena. It gets worse. Walker’s disempowering view of higher education was made quite clear in his attempt to sneak into his new budget an attempt to rewrite the purpose and mission of the university system, one that clearly was aimed at sabotaging the university as a public good. As Mary Bottari and Jonas Persson point out:

Buried in his proposed budget bill – on page 546 out of a whopping 1839 – Walker scratched out “the search for truth” and took an ax to Wisconsin Idea, the guiding philosophy that the university is created to solve problems and improve people’s lives beyond the boundaries of the campus. Instead he wanted the university to “meet the state’s workforce needs.” For extra measure, he scratched out “the legislature finds it in the public interest” to provide a system of higher education; he instead made it a “constitutional obligation.” (28)

Under the current regime of neoliberal savagery and its cruel austerity policies, Walker is not a political exception; he is the rule. The extremist wing of the Republican Party hates the notion that the university might function primarily to address important social issues in the name of the public good. Couple this particular fear and ideological fundamentalism with the rampant idiocy and anti-intellectualism that has become an organizing principle of the new extremists at all levels of government and it becomes clear that public and higher education are prime targets in the struggle to create a fundamentalist-driven culture that supports those identifications, desires and modes of agency receptive to the rise of an authoritarian society and police state in which criticism is viewed as a form of treason and even the mildest of liberal rhetoric is disparaged or dismissed out of hand.

For instance, in Oklahoma, the state’s politicians and lawmakers have introduced a bill that eliminates the teaching of Advanced Placement US history courses in the public high schools. (29) The reason behind the bill defies logic and reflects the new stupidity and religious fundamentalism that are at the heart of the conservative assault against reason and critical thinking. According to Judd Legum, “Oklahoma Rep. Dan Fisher (R) has introduced ’emergency’ legislation ‘prohibiting the expenditure of funds on the Advanced Placement United States History course.’ Fisher is part of a group called the ‘Black Robe Regiment’ which argues that ‘the church and God himself has been under assault, marginalized, and diminished by the progressives and secularists.'” (30) Ben Carson, a potential GOP presidential candidate and pediatric neurosurgeon, stated that the students who finished the course would be “ready to sign up for ISIS.” (31)

The essence of the push back against the AP US history course was echoed by the Republican National Committee in a resolution claiming that it was too negative, and reflected “a radically revisionist view of US history that emphasizes negative aspects of our nation’s history while omitting or minimizing positive aspects.” (32) What at first glance appears to be a case of egregious ignorance is in reality a religious fundamentalist attack on any viable notion of historical consciousness and public memory. (33) These politicians are the ground troops for the new authoritarianism that rewards and revels in thoughtlessness and despises any criticism of US domestic and foreign policy. Truly, the brownshirts of our time, they are a new breed of ideological muggers whose minds are unburdened by a complicated thought, who choke on their own ignorance and sutured political certainties. They represent another one of the forces, in addition to the apostles of a savage neoliberalism and the hedge fund criminals, out to destroy public and higher education, in the United States, even in its weakest liberal version.

Another example of this type of fundamentalism, wrapped in the mantle of American exceptionalism, can be found in comments by former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani criticizing President Obama’s loyalty to the United States. Giuliani claimed unapologetically at a fundraiser for rich donors supporting Republican Gov. Scott Walker’s bid for the presidency that Obama did not love the United States, and oddly enough that he “doesn’t love you. And he doesn’t love me. He wasn’t brought up through love of his country.” (34) For Giuliani and his ilk, patriotism is the engine of conformity and any attempt to offer up constructive criticism in which US policies are interrogated is disparaged as an act of negativism, at best, and at worse, positions one as treasonous or un-American.

This poisonous ideology has a long history in the United States and is gaining ground once again with the emergence of a creeping authoritarianism. Moreover, it is an ideology that promotes a deep-seated anti-intellectualism and a climate of fear that seeps into criticisms of higher education. Giuliani’s comments are not merely idiotic and stupid; they are infused with a racism and militant nationalism that resonates with the rise of totalitarian ideologies and regimes in the 1930s. (35) Moreover, they are suggestive of the degree to which all vestiges of democracy, liberty, dissent and equality have become a liability in a society that is now ruled by the financial elite and ideological barbarians who support this shameful anti-democratic rhetoric and policies that reinforce it. This is the discourse of totalitarianism and its endpoint is a recapitulation of the worst horrors that history has produced.

Higher education is not going to save the United States from becoming more authoritarian, but its destruction as a democratic public sphere is a crucial signpost as to how far we have tipped over into the nightmare of authoritarianism. The shutting down of the higher education system as a democratic public sphere is not a definitive marker of defeat. On the contrary, it suggests the need for a new understanding of politics, one in which the university has a crucial role to play in the struggle to defend radical democracy as the new commons, and education as central to a politics that takes it seriously. The winds are changing and this struggle is coming once again into view. We see it in Europe with the rise of radical political parties in Spain and Greece that connect the struggle over economic power with the struggle to create new modes of agency, culture, education and ideology, all of which now infuse the linking of politics to larger social movements.

In this struggle, there is a need to reclaim an insurgent public memory and the lost or suppressed narratives of older progressive battles in order to both learn from them and to build upon their insights. This is necessary in order for educators and others to rethink the meaning of politics, reclaim the radical imagination, launch a comprehensive education program that speaks to the concrete issues bearing down on peoples’ lives, and develop new political formations capable of merging the various struggles together under the wide banner of a post-capitalist democracy “that serves people over corporations.” (36) As Tariq Ali has mentioned in a different context, the history of the struggles and suppression of the US working class, Communist Party and other progressive struggles has been erased: “This is a history that is not emphasized. This wretched neoliberalism has downgraded the teaching of history. It is the one subject they really hate.” If education does not become the center of politics, democracy as an ideal and site of struggle will fail to inspire and energize a new generation of young people. And a new wave of domestic terrorism will descend on the United States, already visible in the rise of the police and surveillance state. At stake here is the need to take seriously Pierre Bourdieu’s insistence that too many progressives have underestimated that “the most important forms of domination are not only economic but also intellectual and pedagogical, and lie on the side of belief and persuasion.” (37) It is well worth remembering that politics undermines its pedagogical functions and democratic goals when it underestimates “the symbolic and pedagogical dimensions of struggle” and fails to forge the “appropriate weapons to fight on this front.” (38)

Such a failure generally produces not only the tactics of vanguardism, but also promotes strategies that underestimate the challenge of getting people to think differently and to invest something of themselves in an insurgent politics in which they can recognize their sense of agency and hope. Not only is there a need to challenge, disrupt and interrogate the market imaginaries, visions and vocabularies that undermine the great ideals that a range of social movements have fought for in the past, but also there is the need to combine the educative function of changing hearts and minds with sustained efforts to build robust, large-scale organizations and what Nancy Fraser calls “large-scale public powers.” (39) The Occupy movement taught us that “emancipatory ideas not be confined to separate enclaved arenas where only those who already believe in them are exposed to arguments for them.” (40) Occupy created a large umbrella under the call to eliminate inequality in a wide range of areas extending from the economic realm to a variety of spheres that included all manner of exclusions based on race, sexual orientation and the destruction of the environment. At the same time, Occupy failed to create a strong presence because it lacked the capacity for large-scale coordination and long-term organizations. That is, it failed to develop and sustain a public space in which a broad-based movement could be mobilized in the interest of creating sustainable counter publics. Tariq Ali captures this failure perfectly in his comment:

I was sympathetic to the Occupy movement, but not to the business of not having any demands…. They should have had a charter demanding a free health service, an end to the pharmaceuticals and insurance companies’ control of the health service, a free education at every level for all Americans. The notion, promoted by anarchists such as John Holloway, that you can change the world without taking power is useless. I have a lot of respect for the anarchists that mobilize and fight for immigrant rights. But I am critical of those who theorize a politics that is not political. You have to have a political program. (41)

Surely, even a modest list of demands that would challenge market fundamentalism such as a call to break up big banks, a tax on trading, free education for all, free health care, reducing the military budget to create a jobs program, investing in crucial infrastructures, expanding public transportation, a high tax rate on big corporations and the salaries of the ultra-rich job destroyers such as the CEOs who run banks, hedge funds and other rogue financial institutions, would be a productive beginning to question and challenge the most basic assumptions of a normalized capitalism. The resistance to oppressive power structures demands a politics, public pedagogy and political formation that embraces struggle as part of developing a political program on a national and international scale that can inspire, energize and produce a collective show of sustained solidarity.

The current historical moment calls for a politics that is transnational in its scope, global in its sense of responsibility and capable of creating new democratic public spheres in which it becomes possible to show private troubles can be connected to larger social issues, and public connections and modes of solidarity can be sustained beyond the private sphere. Only then will the promise and possibility of creating a radical global commons in the service of a radical democracy come into view. (42)

History is open, and the times are rife with unrest accompanied by new levels of state terrorism, all of which call for new ways to subvert the theater of cruelty and class consolidation that has the globe in the stranglehold of a death wish. Neoliberalism in its many punitive forms has exhausted its credibility and now threatens the entirety of human life and the planet itself. Hope is in the air but it won’t succeed in creating the promise of a new democratic future unless it first recognizes and grapples with the depth of the US nightmare. It is time for new visions, a new collective radical imagination, new tactics, new political formations and sustained, organized, international struggles. It is time to march into a future that will not mimic the dark authoritarianism haunting the present.

#### That requires rejecting the aff and critically interrogating the colonial discourse of the 1AC---plan focus distracts from crucial conservations about epistemic violence, accepting colonial erasure as a tragic but inevitable byproduct of policymaking.

Stein 16, Professor of Education with a focus on decolonial studies @ University of British Columbia. PhD (Sharon, Rethinking the Ethics of Internationalization: Five Challenges for Higher Education, *Interactions: UCLA Journal of Education and Information Studies*, 12(2))

Many humanist efforts are specifically humanitarian in nature, in which individual students seek to ‘give back’ in recognition of their relative advantage in existing systems. In the context of internationalization, this framing may be preferable to market-driven approaches, yet its construction of relationality maintains the student in a position of benevolence and enlightenment vis-à-vis those they are understood to be ‘helping’ (Jefferess, 2008). In this ethical formation, students from the Global North are generally situated as those with superior knowledge, values, and experiences that they generously grant to the ‘less fortunate.’ Within this paternalistic dynamic, the student is rarely prompted to question the underlying systems or causes of inequality or to consider how they benefit from and perpetuate these systems. Rather, the Other becomes a vehicle for affirming their exceptionalism and moral ‘goodness’ – potentially as a means to justify their own privilege. Gaztambide-Fernández and Howard (2013) point out that this investment in “Being good and having moral standing is a social outcome that is premised on the unequally distributed ability to do certain things, to enact certain roles, and to mobilize particular discourses” (p. 2). This framing then forecloses the opportunity for students to examine their own complicity, and may be understood as an example of what Tuck and Yang (2012), drawing on Malwhinney, describe as “moves to innocence,” through which an individual seeks to assuage their guilt, deny responsibility, preserve a positive self-image, and maintain their existing investments in harmful desired futures.

Thus, despite their important differences, both market-driven and humanist approaches to internationalization are often premised on developmental notions of humanity, and are shaped by a “convenient amnesia” of colonial histories and current structures of harm (Thobani as cited by Stone-Mediatore, 2011, p. 49). Questions that therefore arise include: Why does encountering difference in the context of internationalization often reproduce rather than disrupt assumptions about the supremacy of Western knowledge and society? How might humanitarian efforts abroad function as a means to avoid addressing local injustices? How do developmental logics limit the possibility of engaging in relationships premised on solidarity and self-implication rather than instrumentalization for affirmation of a benevolent self? What might prompt students to see their own material comforts as part of the cause of inequity? What might interrupt our satisfactions with existing formulations of self/subject and other/object, and is it possible to imagine an approach to ethics that begins and ends with neither?

Conclusion: Im/possible Ethical Demands

There is a danger that our critical approaches to the ethics of internationalization may be circularly repeating the very violence that we seek to disrupt. In order to make visible the ways that colonial categories and capitalist imperatives are reproduced, scholars of higher education need to historicize the deep entanglements of our institutions and our subjectivities with empire, trace the origins of our dearest concepts, face our own investments in the false promises of universal humanity and linear progress, and consider how all of these frame and thereby limit available ethical and educational possibilities. As Unterhalter and Carpentier (2010) note, “Global higher education seems uniquely well placed to serve the interests of redressing inequality, enhancing participatory debate and deliberation. But to do this requires higher education institutions recognizing problems of their past and present in order to contribute to ideas of justice for our future” (p. 29). Decolonial analysis, as I have offered in this paper, is just one means of doing this work.

However, analysis itself is insufficient. Having identified the depth of the problems we face, it is common to promptly begin the search for concepts and plans of action that can renew our hope and that we believe will lead to something better. This desire for guaranteed alternatives may be in part related to the fact that conversations about internationalization tend to be, as Waters (2012) suggests, “dominated and driven by educational practitioners – education institutions, state level policy makers and public bodies, as well as private, commercial enterprises – with a vested interest in the ultimate success of internationalising initiatives” (p. 127). The imperative toward immediate improvement and assured success is also a deeply embedded dimension of Western thought, which constantly seeks to reduce complexity and eliminate uncertainty in order to smoothly engineer the future. And there is good reason for seeking solutions; harmful practices and policies do not stop producing harm when we name them. Every critique therefore begs the follow-up questions: “So what? Now what?” (Andreotti, 2011, p. 227).

These questions are important, and answering them is one essential element of our responsibility as researchers and educators to contribute to the reduction of ongoing harm. There is a strong need to produce practical, accessible, and impactful resources for use in higher education classrooms, policy reforms, training for administrators, and social justice programming for students and staff. At the same time, these solutions often create their own unforeseen problems. Furthermore, desires for coherence, consensus, and guaranteed futures have all contributed to the reproduction of significant harms as certain experiences, individuals, and even entire communities are sacrificed or silenced in order to achieve these goals. Although we cannot live and act in a space of uncertainty and ambivalence at all times, the immediate search for practical action and answers can also foreclose difficult but necessary conversations and questions that have no easy resolution. We also need to learn to sit in this space of uncertainty and discomfort to consider questions with either no answer, or too many answers to count; to lay out on the table the contradictory elements of all possible answers to our ‘so what, now what’ questions; and to ask self-implicated questions about our own deep investments in a harmful system.

## ADV 1

### 1NC---Sanctions K

#### Reject sanctions as an ineffective and brutal tool of imperial power

Addis 3 (Adeno Addis is William Ray Forrester Professor of Public and Constitutional Law at Tulane University Law School. He received his B.A. and LL.B. (Honours) from Macquarie University (Australia), and an LL.M. and a J.S.D from Yale. He has published extensively in the areas of American constitutional law, communications law, human rights, and jurisprudence. Human Rights Quarterly 25.3 (2003) 573-623)

In fact, as argued earlier, in a general sense, a major reason for the ineffectiveness of economic sanctions is a result of this conceptual confusion. In relation to the behavior modification objective, it was argued earlier that economic sanctions falsely assume that the people of the target state could pressure the regime to alter the offending policies and behavior. Many studies indicate that multilateral (or, for that matter, even unilateral) economic sanctions do not often force regimes to alter their conduct or policy. To add another voice to that general conclusion, below are comments from the Sub-Commission of the UN Commission on Human Rights: The "theory" behind economic sanctions is that economic pressure on civilians will translate into pressure on the Government for change. This "theory" is bankrupt both legally and practically, as more and more evidence testifies to the inefficacy of comprehensive economic sanctions as a coercive tool. The traditional calculation of balancing civilian suffering against the desired political effects is giving way to the realization that the efficacy of a sanctions regime is in inverse proportion to its impact on civilians. 94 This is not to say, of course, that sanctions are not economically effective—they are. They have devastating impacts on the target nation and its citizens, as the UN sanctions against Iraq and US trade embargoes against Cuba 95 [End Page 606] testify. The point here, rather, is that "the relation[ship] between economic effectiveness and political effectiveness is not at all clear; indeed, it may be an inverse relation." 96 An unaccountable regime will always externalize the cost from itself and its supporters to the ordinary citizens. And the power of the ordinary citizen to punish the regime for the consequences of the sanction is rather negligible, if not non-existent. A newspaper report on the effects of the decade old UN imposed sanctions against Iraq concluded that in Baghdad those sanctions have created two classes of people, a small group of citizens who are "close to the ruling circles" and who are still doing very well, on the one hand, and on the other hand, the overwhelming majority of Iraqi citizens "whose income has been so devalued that few . . . can afford a helping of chicken at al-Sa'ah [the equivalent of Kentucky Fried Chicken]." 97 Treating civilians in such circumstances effectively as "outlaws" is the cruelest form of indifference. Economic effectiveness does not correlate with political effectiveness. 98 Even in relation to the identity-constituting objective, many of the sanction regimes seem to be spectacularly unsuccessful. The image they project is not an international community that believes in the centrality of human rights as its very identity, but the opposite. Once again, consider Iraq. When the lives of many civilians, including many children, are put at risk or even lost as a result of sanctions, part of whose purpose is said, at least publicly, to be the protection of human rights, 99 the image (the identity) [End Page 607] of the international community becomes one that is quite willing to sacrifice the rights and lives of a considerable number of individuals from certain parts of the world to achieve certain political goals. For many individuals from developing countries and from non-western traditions, this suspicion gets strengthened when they hear statements such as the one from former US Secretary of State and Ambassador to the United Nations, Madeline Albright. Albright was asked by Lesley Stahl of "60 Minutes" whether the death of a half-million people—which reports had suggested might have taken place—was an acceptable price for sanctions and Albrght responded: "we think the price is worth it." 100 The image of the international community is, therefore, one that devalues not only non-western traditions and horizons of significance, 101 but the very lives of non-western peoples as well. 102 A public attempt to dissociate oneself from evil ends up creating an even greater evil.

### 1NC---Sanctions Fail---North Korea

#### NoKo sanctions fail---denuclearization is impossible---five reasons.

Lei 18, an associate research fellow with China Institute of International Studies, a foreign policy think tank based in Beijing. (Cui, June 22nd, 2018, “Why It’s Nearly Impossible to Denuclearize North Korea”, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/06/why-its-nearly-impossible-to-denuclearize-north-korea/>)

First, recent developments in international politics might discourage North Korea from honoring its commitment to denuclearization.

On the one hand, North Korea can leverage the growing competition between the United States and China to achieve its goal. With the United States now launching a trade offensive on China, it is natural for China to take retaliatory measures. If the trade dispute escalates, which is very likely, it may spill over to the security field. If once again in the future North Korea refuses to take further steps to denuclearize, and the United States tries to persuade China to impose tougher sanctions on North Korea, it is likely that China may decline the demand as retaliation on the United States for its trade offensive.

On the other hand, the united front to exert pressure on North Korea to denuclearize is unraveling, at least for now. Just before the summit with Kim, Trump openly admitted that denuclearization needs a process, which implied that the United States has accepted the North Korean position of phased and synchronized denuclearization. China holds similar positions. In addition, China is thinking about sanctions relief. It is reported that bans on cross-border trade have been relaxed along the China-North Korea border. Russia has already been advocating sanctions relief as well. And with inter-Korea relations getting warm, the Moon Jae-in administration in South Korea is prioritizing peace over denuclearization.

Second, nuclear weapons are too precious in Kim’s eyes to be traded away for any rewards achieved after denuclearization. Promised sanctions relief or economic prosperity is not very appealing to Kim because it may lead to regime instability, as China experienced in the late 1980s. Instead, minimal opening up and quasi-isolation will more likely keep the regime secure, holding unfavorable foreign influence at bay.

Simply put, Kim wants absolute security. If he did not pursue 100 percent security, he would not have imposed extremely tight controls on the flow of people and information into and out of the country as his father and grandfather did. If he could take risks, he would not have secured his position by purging his potential adversaries and their family members, and assassinating his half-brother even though the latter constituted no political challenge to him. If he did not pursue absolute security, he would not have had hundreds of trains in north and northeast China make way for his special train when he visited Beijing in March.

Following this logic, it is hard to swallow that Kim will opt to give away the security of possessing nuclear weapons. Suppose the United States provides a security assurance to North Korea and withdraws all its troops from South Korea and even Japan — the U.S. military still poses security threats to North Korea as its intercontinental ballistic missiles can target North Korea from Guam, Hawaii, or the North American continent.

Third, North Korea has the potential to follow the Indian model. Some analysts say that, inherently different from North Korea, India has demonstrated rationality and international responsibility with regards to nonproliferation. To refute the above argument, Kim can launch a charm offensive, as he did in Panmunjom and Singapore, and persuade other countries to believe that North Korea has the same traits as India. If India can get international acquiescence to its nuclear program without punishment, then North Korea can do it too.

Fourth, North Korea needs to overcome internal obstacles to denuclearize. It has been written into the constitution that the DPRK is a nuclear weapons state. It would be hard for Kim to explain to the people why it is necessary for North Korea, as a nuclear power, to dismantle nuclear facilities. The vested interests related to the nuclear and missile programs will be another obstacle to denuclearization. Nuclear scientists and engineers will be unemployed and the military will lose a great number of posts if all the elements of the nuclear program are eliminated.

Fifth, the technical nature of denuclearization offers North Korea chance to renege sometime in the future. No doubt, it will take years to complete denuclearization as it is extremely complex. Nuclear programs involve many elements, including nuclear material, reactors, weapons, command and control systems, testing facilities, delivery vehicles, personnel, and so on. Moreover, denuclearization requires such time-consuming procedures as the capping of nuclear operations, declaration of inventories, inspections of facilities, dismantlement and verification. If Stanford scientist Siegfried Hecker’s roadmap for denuclearization, or an updated version of it, is adopted by the Trump administration, it will take about 10 years to complete the denuclearization process, which is full of uncertainties and risks. If a future U.S. president does not see North Korea as an imminent threat to the United States and loosens pressure on it, North Korea could manage to preserve minimal nuclear capability and become a nuclear threshold country. If need be, Pyongyang can resume nuclear development in a short period of time with preserved technologies and know-how. In another scenario, if Kim asks for an astronomical amount of remuneration for implementing a certain procedure of denuclearization and the United States dismisses the demand, North Korea will have a good excuse not to take further steps.

To sum up, sadly, we might never see a denuclearized North Korea in our lifetime. If we can list so many reasons why Kim will not denuclearize — aside from those having been put forward by other analysts — and if it is hard to refute most of them, then the prospect of denuclearization is desperately dim. Perhaps, barring military options that entail catastrophic and unbearable consequences, the only thing we can do may be, through a prolonged negotiation process, to make North Korea as incomplete of a nuclear power as possible.

### 1NC---AT: !---NoKo

#### No North Korean adventurism or COVID-induced collapse

Grady 9-11-2020, former managing editor of Navy Times, retired as director of communications for the Association of the United States Army. His reporting on national defense and national security has appeared on Breaking Defense, GovExec.com, NextGov.com, DefenseOne.com, Government Executive and USNI News (John Grady, “U.S. Forces Korea CO: North Korea Showing No Signs of Regime Instability” <https://news.usni.org/2020/09/11/u-s-forces-korea-co-north-korea-showing-no-signs-of-regime-instability>)

North Korea is not showing any signs of lashing out against South Korea or Japan or launching a deliberate provocation as the American presidential election nears, the senior commander on the peninsula said Thursday. Army Gen. Robert Abrams, speaking in a Center for Strategic and International Studies online forum, said “we’re not seeing any sign of regime instability” as North Korea confronts the threat of COVID-19 that sharply curtailed its trade with China, recovers from three typhoons this year and remains under severe U.N. economic sanctions. North Korean leader Kim Jong-un’s regime “is focused on getting their country back together.” Abrams, commander of U.S. Forces Korea, said as harsh as conditions are now, they do not compare to the widespread famine that Kim’s father faced in the mid-1990s. Along the Demilitarized Zone between the two Koreas, “the reduction in tensions is palpable” from earlier this year. Abrams remained hopeful that some type of negotiations over Pyongyang’s nuclear and missile programs could resume between the North and South or between the United States and North Korea.

### 1NC---Sanctions Fail---Iran

#### Iran sanctions fail---JCPOA proves.

Libby 15, \*Lewis Libby is senior vice president of Hudson Institute. He guides the Institute’s program on national security and defense issues, devoting particular attention to U.S. national security strategy, strategic planning, the future of Asia and the Middle East. \*Hillel Fradkin is a senior fellow and director of the Center on Islam, Democracy, and the Future of the Muslim World at Hudson Institute. (August 25th, 2015, “Enforcing the Iran Deal: Another Gaping Hole”, https://www.hudson.org/research/11556-enforcing-the-iran-deal-another-gaping-hole)

Americans have debated whether the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) gives inspectors sufficient visibility into suspected, undisclosed Iranian activities, and whether, in the event of Iranian breach, sanctions will snapback. But there’s a bigger problem: the Joint Plan grants Iran and friends grounds to exclude from snapback sanctions long-term sales of Iranian oil and gas, or virtually any non-nuclear items that Iran wishes.

It’s a hole in the agreement through which Iran and its future business partners will shove twenty years of, for example, oil tankers. Future U.S. presidents will lose any meaningful economic leverage.

JCPOA Paragraph 37 governs snapback sanctions, which are the only means under the plan, for enforcing it. Paragraph 37 excludes snapping back old UN sanctions “with retroactive effect to contracts signed between any party and Iran or any Iranian individuals and entities prior to” sanctions being re-imposed.

So, once the JCPOA is in place and sanctions lifted, Iran or any Iranian entity could launch long-term (say 20 year) contracts to sell to “any party”— including Chinese, Russian, Lebanese or other parties friendly to Iran—all the oil or gas, for example, that Iran chooses in the future to sell. This would be similar to “output contracts” used in the commercial world. Similarly, Iran could sign long term contracts to buy or sell other non-nuclear items, as well as to cover additional, otherwise impermissible arrangements.

Yes, sanctions snap back in this scenario, but around a huge, multi-million dollar hole.

Not surprisingly, Iran has already leapt at this loophole. On July 23, just nine days after announcing the JCPOA, Iran’s Minister of Industry, Mines, and Trade, Mohammad Nematzsadeh, announced preparation of a new “model contract,” initially designed for Iranian oil and gas industries, but which might later apply to other industries as well. How long would these contracts run? Twenty to twenty-five years.

Long term contracts to sell oil usually run only a couple of years, as expert Lucian Pugliarisi of energy consulting firm EPRINC notes. But to avoid sanctions, Iran and its partners will sign much longer-term sales contracts, or tie them to investments, service or expertise transfers, common to longer-term arrangements. Either way, Iran will argue that the future business it has locked in is also locked out of any sanctions regime.

Nor will Iran be the only advocate, as Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif recently stressed. Companies and countries that benefit from such long-term contracts may stand beside it. Some will likely be JCPOA parties, including China and Russia, but allies Germany and France, and indeed, other countries, too, are sending business missions to Tehran.

### 1NC---AT: !---Cyber

#### Cyberattacks solve nuclear war---empirics and data.

Jensen and Valeriano 19 (Benjamin, PhD, is a nonresident senior fellow at the Atlantic Council’s Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security, and Brandon, PhD, is the Donald Bren Chair of Military Innovation at the Marine Corps University, “WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT CYBER ESCALATION? OBSERVATIONS FROM SIMULATIONS AND SURVEYS,” November 2019, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/What_do_we_know_about_cyber_escalation_.pdf>, DOA: 10-23-2021) //Snowball

Twenty-first century great power competition involves nuclear-armed states and regional powers engaged in high-stakes standoffs mixing military threats, diplomatic warnings, and economic coercion.1 In November 2015, Russia responded to Turkey shooting down a Russian jet with a mix of denial-of-service attacks and economic threats, not military force.2 In June 2019, the United States retaliated against Iranian aggression in the Persian Gulf, including Tehran shooting down a US drone and attacking international ships transiting the area, not with airstrikes or cruise missiles, but with a limited-objective cyber operation.3 That same month, the United States revealed it had implanted dangerous malware on Russian electrical grids as a deterrent to interfering in US interests.4 Modern crises bargaining involves a mix of overt and covert cross-domain signals states use to manage escalation and provide options that might help them advance their interests short of war.

Unlike the Cold War in the twentieth century, this competition involves a new domain: cyberspace. From the United States to Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea, states are using cyber operations to exert influence and control. Whether massive military and commercial espionage campaigns5 or international extortion rings and theft,6 the cyber domain offers an outlet for states to advance their interests. Does the resulting cyber competition create new escalation risks? Do cyber operations alter how states respond to international crises in a way that creates incentives for decision makers to cross the Rubicon and use military force to settle disputes? This question is central to current cyber strategy debates and the idea of persistent engagement and defending forward in cyberspace.7

The answer is surprising: no. To date, cyber operations have tended to offer great powers escalatory offramps. They have provided signaling mechanisms that have let states shape an adversary’s behavior without engaging military forces and risking military escalation.8 Despite the uncertainty surrounding how states use new technologies for strategic ends, cyber operations tend to be stabilizing and provide options for avoiding costly, protracted conflicts.

This issue brief draws on new academic research, simulations, and survey experiments to study how cyber operations alter crisis decision-making during great power competition. Specifically, it analyzes escalation pathways and how the informed public and foreign policy actors conceptualize disruptive technologies and integrate them into larger competitive strategies. Based on the evidence, cyber operations offer a valuable escalatory offramp. Even states with more escalatory attitudes tend not to respond militarily to disputes when they have the option of imposing costs and signaling through cyberspace.

How states use cyber operations and the resulting escalation risk is a crucial area of policy-relevant research. Outside of Iran, the majority of cyber operations have been initiated by nuclear-armed states.9 Despite popular images of lone hackers in basements, cyber operations require an investment in networks, infrastructure, and human capital or sufficient sums of money to buy capability on the black market.10 These operations are complex instruments of statecraft that foreign policy actors integrate with other diplomatic, information, military, and economic instruments of power.11 A combination of these instruments sends a clear signal to rival states. Cyber operations may, therefore, help stabilize great power competition in the twenty-first century.

## ADV 2

### 1NC---AT: !---O-Crime

#### No impact:

#### 1---their evidence just says it’s an illegal economy---lacks a terminal

#### 2---empirically disproven---organized crime has existed for decades

### 1NC---AT: !---Prolif

#### No prolif---EVEN IF, no impact.

Mueller 20, senior fellow at the Cato Institute, member of the political science department and senior research scientist with the Mershon Center for International Security Studies at Ohio State University. (John, 06/24/20, “Nuclear Alarmism: Proliferation and Terrorism”, *Cato Institute*, <https://www.cato.org/publications/publications/nuclear-alarmism-proliferation-terrorism>)

Nuclear Proliferation

In an influential book, Graham Allison argues that “no new nuclear weapons states” should be a prime foreign policy principle, and analyst Joseph Cirincione very much agrees, insisting that nonproliferation should be “our number one national‐​security priority.”5

There are good reasons to avoid alarmism in this area, however. First, the pace of nuclear proliferation has been far slower than has been commonly predicted primarily because the weapons convey little advantage to their possessor. Second, the consequences of such proliferation that has taken place have been substantially benign: those who have acquired the weapons have “used” them simply to stoke their egos or to deter real or imagined threats.6

And thirdly, the costs of anti‐​proliferation policy have been very substantial: the number of people who have died as a consequence of dedicated efforts to contain nuclear proliferation runs well into six figures.

Pace

Alarmists have been wrong for decades about the pace of nuclear proliferation. Dozens of technologically capable countries have considered obtaining nuclear arsenals, but very few have done so. Indeed, as Jacques Hymans has pointed out, even supposedly optimistic forecasts about nuclear dispersion have proved to be too pessimistic.7 Thus, in 1958, the National Planning Association predicted “a rapid rise in the number of atomic powers … by the mid‐​1960s.”8 A few years later, C. P. Snow sagely predicted, “Within, at the most, six years, China and several other states [will] have a stock of nuclear bombs,” and John Kennedy observed that there might be “ten, fifteen, twenty” countries with a nuclear capacity by 1964.9

As part of that forecasting, it has generally been assumed that nuclear weapons would be important status — or virility — symbols; therefore, all advanced countries would want to have them in order to show how “powerful” they were. Thus, France’s de Gaulle opined in the 1960s, “No country without an atom bomb could properly consider itself independent,” and Robert Gilpin concluded that “the possession of nuclear weapons largely determines a nation’s rank in the hierarchy of international prestige.”10 In Gilpinian tradition, some analysts who describe themselves as “realists” have insisted for years that Germany and Japan must soon come to their senses and quest after nuclear weapons.11 Such punditry has gone astray in part because the pundits insist on extrapolating from the wrong cases. A more pertinent prototype would have been Canada, a country that could easily have had nuclear weapons by the 1960s but declined to make the effort.12 In fact, over the decades, a huge number of countries capable of developing nuclear weapons have neglected even to consider the opportunity — for example, Canada, Italy, and Norway — even as Argentina, Brazil, Libya, South Korea, and Taiwan have backed away from or reversed nuclear weapons programs, and Belarus, Kazakhstan, South Africa, and Ukraine have actually surrendered or dismantled an existing nuclear arsenal.13 Some of that reduction is no doubt due to the hostility of the nuclear nations, but even without that, the Canadian case seems to have proved to have rather general relevance.

To begin with, as Stephen Meyer has shown, there is no “technological imperative” for countries to obtain nuclear weapons once they have achieved the technical capacity to do so.14 Moreover, like military prowess in general, the weapons have not proved to be crucial status symbols. As Robert Jervis has observed, “India, China, and Israel may have decreased the chance of direct attack by developing nuclear weapons, but it is hard to argue that they have increased their general prestige or influence.”15 How much more status would Japan have if it possessed nuclear weapons? Would anybody pay a great deal more attention to Britain or France if their arsenals held 5,000 nuclear weapons, or would anybody pay much less if they had none? Did China need nuclear weapons to impress the world with its economic growth? Or with its Olympics? As Jennifer Mackby and Walter Slocombe observe, “Germany, like its erstwhile Axis ally, Japan, has become powerful because of its economic might rather than its military might, and its renunciation of nuclear weapons may even have reinforced its prestige.”16

Decades of alarmist predictions about proliferation chains, cascades, dominoes, waves, avalanches, epidemics, and points of no return have proved to be faulty. The proliferation of nuclear weapons has been far slower than routinely expected because, insofar as most leaders of most countries (even rogue ones) have considered acquiring the weapons, they have come to appreciate several defects: the weapons are dangerous, distasteful, costly, and likely to rile the neighbors. Moreover, as Jacques Hymans has demonstrated, the weapons have also been exceedingly difficult to obtain for administratively dysfunctional countries like Iran.17

Consequences

Although we have now suffered through two‐​thirds of a century during which there has been great hysteria about the disasters inherent in nuclear proliferation, the consequences of the proliferation that has occurred have been substantially benign. The few countries to which the weapons have proliferated have quietly kept them in storage and haven’t even found much benefit in rattling them from time to time. And even the deterrence value of the weapons has been questionable — the major Cold War participants, for example, scarcely needed visions of mushroom clouds to conclude that any replication of World War II, with or without nuclear weapons, was a decidedly bad idea.18

Moreover, there has never been a militarily compelling — or even minimally sensible — reason to use the weapons, particularly because of an inability to identify suitable targets or ones that could not be attacked about as effectively by conventional munitions. And it is difficult to see how nuclear weapons benefited their possessors in specific military ventures. Israel’s presumed nuclear weapons did not restrain the Arabs from attacking in 1973, nor did Britain’s prevent Argentina’s seizure of the Falklands in 1982. Similarly, the tens of thousands of nuclear weapons in the arsenals of the enveloping allied forces did not cause Saddam Hussein to order his occupying forces out of Kuwait in 1990. Nor did possession of the bomb benefit America in Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, or Afghanistan; France in Algeria; or the Soviet Union in Afghanistan.

### 1NC---AT: !---Terror

#### Apocalyptic terrorism scenarios are grounded in vested political interests---the impact is a racist extermination of alterity.

Bryan 12 [Desiree, Manager, Operations, Asia Department at U.S. Chamber of Commerce, MScECON Candidate @ time: Security Studies at Aberystwyth University, The Popularity of the ‘New Terrorism’ Discourse, [http://www.e—ir.info/2012/06/22/the—popularity—of—the—new—terrorism—discourse](http://www.e-ir.info/2012/06/22/the-popularity-of-the-new-terrorism-discourse)]

New Terrorism vs. Old Terrorism

The opening sentence of a textbook on terrorism states, “Terrorism has been a dark feature of human behavior since the dawn of recorded history” (Martin, 2010, 3). If this is the case, what makes the ‘new terrorism’ different from the old? According to the mainstream orthodoxy on terrorism, the old terrorism was generally characterized by: left wing ideology; the use of small scale, conventional weapons; clearly identifiable organizations or movements with equally clear political and social messages; specific selection of targets and “explicit grievances championing specific classes or ethnonational groups” (Martin, 2010, 28).¶ Also according to the orthodoxy, the shift to the new terrorism, on the other hand, is thought to have emerged in the early 1990s (Jackson, 2011) and took root in mass consciousness with the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the U.S. (Martin, 2010, 3). The new terrorism is characterized by: “loose, cell—based networks with minimal lines of command and control,” “desired acquisition of high—intensity weapons and weapons of mass destruction” (Martin, 2010, 27), “motivated by religious fanaticism rather than political ideology and it is aimed at causing mass causality and maximum destruction” (Jackson, 2007, 179—180).¶ However, these dichotomous definitions of the old and new types of terrorism are not without problems. The first major problem is that terrorism has been characterized by the same fundamental qualities throughout history. Some of the superficial characteristics, the means of implementation (e.g. the invention of the Internet or dynamite) or the discourse (communism vs. Islam) may have evolved, but the central components remain the same. The second major problem is that the characterization of new terrorism is, at best, rooted in a particular political ideology, biased and inaccurate. At worst, it is racist, promotes war mongering and has contributed to millions of deaths. As David Rapoport states:¶ Many contemporary studies begin … by stating that although terrorism has always been a feature of social existence, it became ‘significant’ … when it ‘increased in frequency’ and took on ‘novel dimensions’ as an international or transnational activity, creating in the process a new ‘mode of conflict’ (1984, 658).¶ Isabelle Duyvesteyn points out that this would indicate evidence for the emergence of a new type of terrorism, if it were not for the fact that the article was written in 1984 and described a situation from the 1960s (Duyvesteyn, 2004, 439). It seems that there have been many new phases of terrorism over the years. So many so that the definition of ‘new’ has been stretched significantly and applied relatively across decades. Nevertheless, the idea that this terrorism, that which the War on Terror (WoT) is directed against, is the most significant and unique form of terrorism that has taken hold in the popular and political discourse. Therefore, it is useful to address each of the so—called new characteristics in turn.¶ The first characteristic is the idea that new terrorism is based on loosely organized cell—based networks as opposed to the traditional terrorist groups, which were highly localized and hierarchical in nature. An oft—cited example of a traditional terrorist group is the Irish Republican Army (IRA), who operated under a military structure and in a relatively (in contrast to the perceived transnational operations of al—Qaeda) localized capacity. However, some of the first modern terrorists were not highly organized groups but small fragmented groups of anarchists. These groups were heeding the call of revolutionary anarchist Mikhail Bakunin and other contemporary anarchists to achieve anarchism, collectivism and atheism via violent means (Morgan, 2001, 33). Despite the initial, self—described “amorphous” nature of these groups, they were a key force in the Russian Revolution (Maximoff, G.). Furthermore, leading anarchist philosophers of the Russian Revolution argued that terrorists “should organize themselves into small groups, or cells” (Martin, 2010, 217). These small groups cropped up all around Russia and Europe in subsequent years and formed an early form of a “loosely organized cell—based network” not unlike modern day al Qaeda. Duyvesteyn further notes that both the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which was founded in 1964, and Hezbollah, founded 1982, operate on a network structure with very little central control over groups (2004, 444).¶ The second problematic idea of new terrorism is that contemporary terrorist groups aim to acquire and use weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). This belief is simply not supported by empirical evidence. One of the key problems with this theory is that WMDs are significantly more difficult to obtain and utilize than most people understand. Even if a terrorist group were to obtain a biological WMD, “Biologist Matthew Meselson calculates that it would take a ton of nerve gas or five tons of mustard gas to produce heavy causalities among unprotected people in an open area of one square kilometer” (Mueller, 2005, 488). And that’s only an example of the problem with the implementation of WMDs, assuming they are acquired, transported and desirable by a terrorist group in the first place. Additional problems, such as the fact that WMDs “are extremely difficult to deploy and control” (Mueller, 2005, 488) and that making a bomb “is an extraordinarily difficult task” (Mueller, 2005, 489), further diminish the risk. It is interesting to note that, while the potential dangers of WMDs are much lauded, the attacks of September 11th were low tech and had been technologically possible for more than 100 years. Mueller also states, “although nuclear weapons have been around for well over half a century, no state has ever given another state (much less a terrorist group) a nuclear weapon that the recipient could use independently” (2005, 490).¶ All of this talk about the difficultly of acquiring and deploying WMDs (by non—state agents), is not to diminish the question of what terrorists have to gain by utilizing these weapons. It is important to question whether it would even further the aims of terrorists to use WMDs. The evidence suggests otherwise. In the “Politics of Fear” Jackson states, “Mass casualties are most often counterproductive to terrorist aims—they alienate their supporters and can provoke harsh reprisals from the authorities […]” in addition, “[…] they would undermine community support, distort the terrorist’s political message, and invite over—whelming retaliation” (2007, 196—197). Despite popular rhetoric to the contrary, terrorists are “rational political actors and are acutely aware of these dangers” (Jackson, 2007, 197). Government appointed studies on this issue have supported these views.¶ This leads us to the third problem with new terrorism, which is the idea that we are facing a new era of terrorism motivated by religious fanaticism rather than political ideology. As stated previously, earlier, so—called traditional forms of terrorism are associated with left wing, political ideology, whereas contemporary terrorists are described as having “anti—modern goals of returning society to an idealized version of the past and are therefore necessarily anti—democratic, anti—progressive and, by implication, irrational” (Gunning and Jackson, 3). Rapoport argues the idea that religious terrorists are irrational, saying, “what seems to be distinctive about modern [religious] terrorists, their belief that terror can be organized rationally, represents or distorts a major theme peculiar to our own culture […]” (1984, 660). Conveniently for the interests of the political elites, as we shall see later, the idea of irrational fanaticism makes the notion of negotiation and listening to the demands of the other impossible. In light of this, it is interesting to note that the U.S. has, for decades, given billions of dollars in aid to the State of Israel, which could be argued to be a fundamentalist, religious organization that engages in the terrorization of a group of people. Further, it is difficult to speak of The Troubles in Northern Ireland without speaking of the religious conflict, yet it was never assumed that the IRA was “absolutist, inflexible, unrealistic, lacking in political pragmatism, and not amenable to negotiation” (Gunning and Jackson, 4). Rapaport further reinforces the idea that religious terrorism goes back centuries by saying, “Before the nineteenth century, religion provided the only acceptable justifications for terror…” (1984, 659).¶ As we have seen here, problems with the discourse of new terrorism include the fact that these elements of terrorism are neither new nor are the popular beliefs of the discourse supported by empirical evidence. The question remains, then, why is the idea of new terrorism so popular? This question will be addressed next.¶ Political Investment in New Terrorism¶ There are two main categories that explain the popularity of new terrorism. The first category is government and political investment in the propagation of the idea that a distinct, historically unknown type of terrorism exists. The mainstream discourse [1] reinforces, through statements by political elites, media, entertainment and every other way imaginable, the culture of violence, militarism and feelings of fear.

Through mass media, cultural norms and the integration of neoliberal ideology into society, people are becoming increasingly desensitized to human rights issues, war, social justice and social welfare, not to mention apathetic to the political process in general.

# 2NC

#### 3---Chinese leadership only threatens American imperialism.

Singh 18, Journalist, and graduate student. He is a contributing author to Keywords in Radical Philosophy and Education: Common Concepts for Contemporary Movements. His work has appeared in The Grayzone, Truthout, teleSUR English, NewsClick, and The Hampton Institute (Ajit, April 9th, “China’s rise threatens U.S. imperialism, not American people,” *Monthly Review Online*, <https://mronline.org/2018/04/09/chinas-rise-threatens-u-s-imperialism-not-american-people/>, Accessed 10-17-2021)

The unipolar-multipolar struggle

The importance of U.S.-China relations cannot be overstated, with the two countries at the core of a broader unipolar-multipolar struggle over the shape of the international order. While the U.S. seeks to secure global dominance, China’s rise is central to a multipolarisation trend, in which multiple centres of power are emerging to shape a negotiated, more democratic world.

China’s political orientation has been fundamentally shaped by its history of subjugation to foreign powers during its “century of humiliation” and anti-imperialist struggle for national liberation. Under the leadership of the Communist Party, China has always identified itself as part of the Third World or global South and the collective struggle of formerly colonized and oppressed nations against the global inequality wrought by imperialism.

Under the banner of “South-South cooperation”, China continues to champion this collective struggle today, promoting greater say for developing countries in global governance and the construction of a rules-based international order in place of the unilateral actions of major powers, in particular the U.S. More than mere rhetoric, China provides crucial investment, infrastructure construction, technology transfers, debt forgiveness, and diplomatic support to developing countries. Most importantly, unlike the U.S. and West which engage in destructive foreign interventions, China abides by the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries and does not impose conditions on its relations.

China’s respect for the self-determination of other countries has made it an indispensable partner for nations resisting foreign domination and pursuing independent development, including Cuba, Venezuela, Bolivia, Zimbabwe, Syria, Iran, and North Korea. It is for this reason that the late Cuban revolutionary Fidel Castro declared in 2004 that “China has objectively become the most promising hope and the best example for all Third World countries … an important element of balance, progress and safeguard of world peace and stability.” Venezuelan foreign minister Jorge Arreaza echoed these sentiments last December, saying “Thank God humanity can count on China,” as his country faces sanctions, economic sabotage, and threats of regime change from the U.S.

Contributing to the declining global authority of the U.S, China’s international relations have prompted Washington to cynically accuse China of fostering dependency in Africa and being an “imperial power” towards Latin America. In fact, rather than behaving in a predatory manner, China provides sorely needed funding, on favorable terms, to African borrowers, and as we have seen above China supports Latin America’s struggle against imperialism. That China is praised by fiercely independent nations of the global South and faces such charges from the U.S.—the most powerful empire in history—reveals the absurdity of such claims. Anxious about its own decline, the U.S. seeks to both drive a wedge between China and the South, and also restrict the right of developing nations to choose their own partners and path. China has demonstrated that its rise is compatible with the self-determination of other nations—whether capitalist or socialist; what it comes into contradiction with is U.S. imperialism.

It is important to recognize that U.S. hostility towards China is not simply a product of narrow competition with the Asian power, it is a resistance to the empowerment of the global South and democratization of international relations. China is the primary target of U.S. imperialism because of its strategic importance at the heart of the world multipolarisation trend, which threatens to bring an end to U.S. international supremacy and 500 years of Western global dominance.

# 1NR

#### The aff’s “Extinction first” framing is a new link---it willingly sacrifices billions in the Global South at the altar of a miniscule risk of extinction---there’s a reason only white elites like their impact framing.

Torres 21, PhD candidate at Leibniz Universität Hannover. Previously studied at Harvard University and Brandeis University. Author of Morality, Foresight, and Human Flourishing: An Introduction to Existential Risks (Phil, July 28th, “The Dangerous Ideas of ‘Longtermism’ and ‘Existential Risk’,” *Current Affairs*, <https://www.currentaffairs.org/2021/07/the-dangerous-ideas-of-longtermism-and-existential-risk>, Accessed 10-27-2021)

It’s this line of reasoning that leads Bostrom, Greaves, MacAskill, and others to argue that even the tiniest reductions in “existential risk” are morally equivalent to saving the lives of literally billions of living, breathing, actual people. For example, Bostrom writes that if there is “a mere 1 percent chance” that 10^54 conscious beings (most living in computer simulations) come to exist in the future, then “we find that the expected value of reducing existential risk by a mere one billionth of one billionth of one percentage point is worth a hundred billion times as much as a billion human lives.” Greaves and MacAskill echo this idea in a 2021 paper by arguing that “even if there are ‘only’ 1014 lives to come … , a reduction in near-term risk of extinction by one millionth of one percentage point would be equivalent in value to a million lives saved.”

To make this concrete, imagine Greaves and MacAskill in front of two buttons. If pushed, the first would save the lives of 1 million living, breathing, actual people. The second would increase the probability that 10^14 currently unborn people come into existence in the far future by a teeny-tiny amount. Because, on their longtermist view, there is no fundamental moral difference between saving actual people and bringing new people into existence, these options are morally equivalent. In other words, they’d have to flip a coin to decide which button to push. (Would you? I certainly hope not.) In Bostrom’s example, the morally right thing is obviously to sacrifice billions of living human beings for the sake of even tinier reductions in existential risk, assuming a minuscule 1 percent chance of a larger future population: 1054 people.

All of this is to say that even if billions of people were to perish in the coming climate catastrophe, so long as humanity survives with enough of civilization intact to fulfill its supposed “potential,” we shouldn’t be too concerned. In the grand scheme of things, non-runaway climate change will prove to be nothing more than a “mere ripple” —a “small misstep for mankind,” however terrible a “massacre for man” it might otherwise be.

Even worse, since our resources for reducing existential risk are finite, Bostrom argues that we must not “fritter [them] away” on what he describes as “feel-good projects of suboptimal efficacy.” Such projects would include, on this account, not just saving people in the Global South—those most vulnerable, especially women—from the calamities of climate change, but all other non-existential philanthropic causes, too. As the Princeton philosopher Peter Singer writes about Bostrom in his 2015 book on Effective Altruism, “to refer to donating to help the global poor … as a ‘feel-good project’ on which resources are ‘frittered away’ is harsh language.” But it makes perfectly good sense within Bostrom’s longtermist framework, according to which “priority number one, two, three, and four should … be to reduce existential risk.” Everything else is smaller fish not worth frying.

If this sounds appalling, it’s because it is appalling. By reducing morality to an abstract numbers game, and by declaring that what’s most important is fulfilling “our potential” by becoming simulated posthumans among the stars, longtermists not only trivialize past atrocities like WWII (and the Holocaust) but give themselves a “moral excuse” to dismiss or minimize comparable atrocities in the future. This is one reason that I’ve come to see longtermism as an immensely dangerous ideology. It is, indeed, akin to a secular religion built around the worship of “future value,” complete with its own “secularised doctrine of salvation,” as the Future of Humanity Institute historian Thomas Moynihan approvingly writes in his book X-Risk. The popularity of this religion among wealthy people in the West—especially the socioeconomic elite—makes sense because it tells them exactly what they want to hear: not only are you ethically excused from worrying too much about sub-existential threats like non-runaway climate change and global poverty, but you are actually a morally better person for focusing instead on more important things—risk that could permanently destroy “our potential” as a species of Earth-originating intelligent life.

#### Sanctions deny the basic necessities of life.

Addis 3 (Adeno Addis is William Ray Forrester Professor of Public and Constitutional Law at Tulane University Law School. He received his B.A. and LL.B. (Honours) from Macquarie University (Australia), and an LL.M. and a J.S.D from Yale. He has published extensively in the areas of American constitutional law, communications law, human rights, and jurisprudence. Human Rights Quarterly 25.3 (2003) 573-623)

Other critics may concede that more often than not such measures would lead to the desired behavior modification, but at a cost that is often unacceptably high. Economic sanctions deprive citizens of the target state many of the basic necessities of life, leading to massive disruption and even destruction of life. The often high cost in life, liberty, and property that economic sanctions exact on innocent citizens and sectors of the target state are, to these critics, simply unacceptable even if at the end there was to be a change in the action and behavior of the regime of the target state. The moral and material costs that sanctions entail are, to these critics, simply too high to bear. Actually, there are two versions of the moral argument. The weak version is utilitarian in nature. It claims that often the cost in innocent human life and infrastructural damage is far greater than the benefit that is gained by imposing these sanctions. 13 The strong version of the moral argument is Kantian in its outlook. It objects to economic sanctions on the ground that often, if not always, sanctions target innocent civilians for suffering as a means to achieving a foreign policy objective, contrary to Kant's categorical imperative that we treat "humanity, whether in [our] person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end." 14 The argument here is that it is morally [End Page 576] unacceptable to impose suffering on innocent sectors of the target state, as economic sanctions do, for an objective that does not involve the prevention of the deaths of other innocent persons. 15

#### Sanctions prevent Iran from paying for vaccines through normal channels

Limbert 21, former professor of Middle Eastern studies at the U.S. Naval Academy. (John, 1/3/21, Op-Ed: Lift U.S. sanctions that block Iran from buying COVID vaccines, https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2021-01-03/iran-coronavirus-pandemic-american-aid)

Legally, the shipment of medicines to Iran is not under sanctions today, but the Trump administration has made it impossible for Iran to process payments from its central bank, or receive loans from the International Monetary Fund to pay for them. These financial sanctions have deterred international banks and suppliers of medicine from participating in any financial transactions for fear of becoming subject to secondary U.S. sanctions imposed on their companies or banks.

#### Failure to control in Iran will spread it throughout the Middle East—500 million people

Limbert 21, former professor of Middle Eastern studies at the U.S. Naval Academy. (John, 1/3/21, Op-Ed: Lift U.S. sanctions that block Iran from buying COVID vaccines, https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2021-01-03/iran-coronavirus-pandemic-american-aid)

A COVID deal would help rebuild trust for future negotiations with Iran, as well as improve U.S. relations with the European Union, which have weakened in the Trump era. Stopping the pandemic in Iran is essential to protecting Iran’s neighbors, 16 countries constituting over 500 million people. Without vaccines, more Iranians will die, and coronavirus infections from Iran will spread to other countries in the region.

#### Denuclearization fails---empirics and leverage.

Narang et. al 17, \*Ankit Panda is a senior editor at The Diplomat and an independent researcher; \*Vipin Narang is an associate professor of political science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. (July 6th, 2017, “North Korea’s ICBM: A New Missile and a New Era”, https://warontherocks.com/2017/07/north-koreas-icbm-a-new-missile-and-a-new-era/)

The third option is to consider negotiating with North Korea. This approach has been tried before, both bilaterally and multilaterally, and has always been a difficult sell to those in the policymaking community, who correctly note that it is North Korea that has been consistently in the wrong for years now, carrying out ballistic missile tests and nuclear [tests in violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions](https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/UN-Security-Council-Resolutions-on-North-Korea). Pyongyang also maintains little goodwill or trust with prospective interlocutors given its decision to [violate the spirit of the 1994 U.S.-North Korea Agreed Framework](https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/agreedframework) by starting a clandestine uranium enrichment program and its refusal to recommit to denuclearization. Still, the Agreed Framework, despite its collapse in 2002, did succeed in delaying North Korea’s ultimate acquisition of the bomb by [freezing its plutonium stockpile](http://www.38north.org/2015/05/jlewis051415/). If there’s a lesson to be learned from the agreement, it’s that negotiations can buy time, even with a dearth of trust between the United States and North Korea.

However, one new problem with negotiations that moots many of the conditions that allowed for a freeze deal like the Agreed Framework is that North Korea, by showing us a working ICBM, has upped the ante and gained considerable leverage in any future talks. North Korea would presumably acquiesce to a freeze on its ballistic missile and nuclear testing, but its demands for concessions can now grow credibly steeper. Any prospective agreement with North Korea would require explicit acceptance of their nuclear state status and significant rollbacks to the U.S. conventional military presence in the Northeast Asian theater, both of which are nonstarters for the United States.

**Means they can’t solve the foundational causes for north korea’s aggressive posture in the region**

**EVEN THEN….**

#### The JCPOA fails

Gerecht 18, a senior fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies. He has served as a Iranian-targets officer in the CIA, and is the author of [Know Thine Enemy: A Spy's Journey into Revolutionary Iran](http://www.amazon.com/Know-Thine-Enemy-Journey-Revolutionary/dp/0374182191), (Reuel Marc, May 4th, 2018, “The Iran Deal Is Strategically and Morally Absurd”, https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/05/iran-nuclear-deal-flawed/559595/)

Obama’s “wishful thinking” about the region was never more fully on display than when he speculated that his nuclear agreement with Tehran ought to allow the Iranians and the Saudis time to learn “to share” the region; it has, of course, done the opposite. The agreement—and the Iranian perception of that accord as a Western green light for its continuing aggression—has thrown jet fuel on the sectarian strife that Iran’s clerical regime has so malevolently encouraged. The Syrian war went from bad to catastrophic while Obama was engaged in his secret and then open diplomacy with Tehran. Saudi Arabia, the Emirates, and most probably Turkey, too—the only Muslim power in the Middle East that has the industrial capacity to check Iran’s clerical regime—will probably soon start down the nuclear path because of Obama’s accord.

Obama provided the agreement that Ali Akbar Salehi was searching for. Salehi, the MIT-educated nuclear guru and negotiator who would be better described as Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei’s bomb maker, sought the time and money to perfect the development of high-velocity centrifuges which, once deployed in small, easily concealed cascades, will guarantee the Islamic Republic an unstoppable means to produce weapons-grade uranium. I was recently listening to John Kerry in a small gathering. To hear him tell it, the JCPOA has “permanently shut down all pathways” to an Iranian bomb. The Obamaians like Phil Gordon, who were willing to admit the deal’s significant flaws, were in a small minority.

Former Deputy National Security Advisor Ben Rhodes and so many others were just disingenuous in how they marketed the nuclear diplomacy and the final deal.  An honest approach would have been to straightforwardly enumerate the agreements many flaws and then say what we all knew to be true: This administration is unwilling to use military force to stop the mullahs’ quest for the bomb. We are unwilling to contain Iranian aggression in the Middle East. This is the best that we can do under those circumstances.

But if one were serious about non-proliferation, if one fully comprehended the consummate mendacity of the regime (as if we needed to see the nuclear archive that Mossad just snatched), why in the world would anyone agree to an accord that allows the clerical regime to develop advanced centrifuges? Why in the world would anyone agree not to put severe restrictions on ballistic-missile development in the JCPOA? Or allow the Iranians to soften the language in United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231, so that there is no longer a blanket prohibition against the development of long-range ballistic missiles? In one of my favorite moments in the Washington debate about Obama’s diplomacy, I asked the undersecretary of state for political affairs, Wendy Sherman, why, for Allah’s sake, were we exempting missiles from the JCPOA’s purview. There wasn’t a soul in the Pentagon or the Central Intelligence Agency (with the possible exception of John Brennan) who believed the clerical regime wasn’t developing ever-longer range ballistic missiles to carry nuclear warheads. Her response: We decided to put the emphasis on preventing Tehran from developing warheads.

To translate for those unfamiliar with such intelligence details: The United States was going to ignore that which is easy to detect—the design and testing of missiles—and focus on what is impossible to detect unless you get really lucky with human-intelligence penetrations or walk-ins—the development of warheads. And where have the mullahs probably put warhead design? On Revolutionary Guard Corps bases like Parchin. When we get a chance to review the Iranian archive snatched by Mossad (and I certainly hope the Israelis release all of the material), I suspect we will see in detail what we have long known: Nuclear-weapons research and the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps are inseparable.

In other words, the organization that is responsible for internal oppression, foreign wars, overseas terrorism, and an expeditionary army of non-Iranian Shiites is the overlord of the nuclear-weapons program. Which brings up the most comedic moment in Obama’s nuclear adventure: the remote-controlled soil sampling of earth at Parchin, where International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors were not permitted to enter. According to Obama, Kerry, Sherman, and so many others, the JCPOA granted the International Atomic Energy Agency access to Iranian military bases for inspections. But “access” here doesn’t meet the standard, say, of the Oxford English Dictionary, where it means:  “Admittance (to the presence or use of a thing or person); the action or process of obtaining stored documents, data, etc.” Not only did Obama debase American diplomacy, but his mania for a deal debased the International Atomic Energy Agency, too.

#### No cyber impact.

Lewis 20, PhD, a senior vice president and director of the Technology Policy Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C. (James Andrew, 8-17-2020, "Dismissing Cyber Catastrophe", *CSIS*, https://www.csis.org/analysis/dismissing-cyber-catastrophe)

A catastrophic cyberattack was first predicted in the mid-1990s. Since then, predictions of a catastrophe have appeared regularly and have entered the popular consciousness. As a trope, a cyber catastrophe captures our imagination, but as analysis, it remains entirely imaginary and is of dubious value as a basis for policymaking. There has never been a catastrophic cyberattack.

To qualify as a catastrophe, an event must produce damaging mass effect, including casualties and destruction. The fires that swept across California last summer were a catastrophe. Covid-19 has been a catastrophe, especially in countries with inadequate responses. With ~~man-made~~ actions, however, a catastrophe is harder to produce than it may seem, and for cyberattacks a catastrophe requires organizational and technical skills most actors still do not possess. It requires planning, reconnaissance to find vulnerabilities, and then acquiring or building attack tools—things that require resources and experience. To achieve mass effect, either a few central targets (like an electrical grid) need to be hit or multiple targets would have to be hit simultaneously (as is the case with urban water systems), something that is itself an operational challenge.

It is easier to imagine a catastrophe than to produce it. The 2003 East Coast blackout is the archetype for an attack on the U.S. electrical grid. No one died in this blackout, and services were restored in a few days. As electric production is digitized, vulnerability increases, but many electrical companies have made cybersecurity a priority. Similarly, at water treatment plants, the chemicals used to purify water are controlled in ways that make mass releases difficult. In any case, it would take a massive amount of chemicals to poison large rivers or lakes, more than most companies keep on hand, and any release would quickly be diluted.

More importantly, there are powerful strategic constraints on those who have the ability to launch catastrophe attacks. We have more than two decades of experience with the use of cyber techniques and operations for coercive and criminal purposes and have a clear understanding of motives, capabilities, and intentions. We can be guided by the methods of the Strategic Bombing Survey, which used interviews and observation (rather than hypotheses) to determine effect. These methods apply equally to cyberattacks. The conclusions we can draw from this are:

Nonstate actors and most states lack the capability to launch attacks that cause physical damage at any level, much less a catastrophe. There have been regular predictions every year for over a decade that nonstate actors will acquire these high-end cyber capabilities in two or three years in what has become a cycle of repetition. The monetary return is negligible, which dissuades the skilled cybercriminals (mostly Russian speaking) who might have the necessary skills. One mystery is why these groups have not been used as mercenaries, and this may reflect either a degree of control by the Russian state (if it has forbidden mercenary acts) or a degree of caution by criminals.

There is enough uncertainty among potential attackers about the United States’ ability to attribute that they are unwilling to risk massive retaliation in response to a catastrophic attack. (They are perfectly willing to take the risk of attribution for espionage and coercive cyber actions.)

No one has ever died from a cyberattack, and only a handful of these attacks have produced physical damage. A cyberattack is not a nuclear weapon, and it is intellectually lazy to equate them to nuclear weapons. Using a tactical nuclear weapon against an urban center would produce several hundred thousand casualties, while a strategic nuclear exchange would cause tens of millions of casualties and immense physical destruction. These are catastrophes that some hack cannot duplicate. The shadow of nuclear war distorts discussion of cyber warfare.

State use of cyber operations is consistent with their broad national strategies and interests. Their primary emphasis is on espionage and political coercion. The United States has opponents and is in conflict with them, but they have no interest in launching a catastrophic cyberattack since it would certainly produce an equally catastrophic retaliation. Their goal is to stay below the “use-of-force” threshold and undertake damaging cyber actions against the United States, not start a war.

This has implications for the discussion of inadvertent escalation, something that has also never occurred. The concern over escalation deserves a longer discussion, as there are both technological and strategic constraints that shape and limit risk in cyber operations, and the absence of inadvertent escalation suggests a high degree of control for cyber capabilities by advanced states. Attackers, particularly among the United States’ major opponents for whom cyber is just one of the tools for confrontation, seek to avoid actions that could trigger escalation.

The United States has two opponents (China and Russia) who are capable of damaging cyberattacks. Russia has demonstrated its attack skills on the Ukrainian power grid, but neither Russia nor China would be well served by a similar attack on the United States. Iran is improving and may reach the point where it could use cyberattacks to cause major damage, but it would only do so when it has decided to engage in a major armed conflict with the United States. Iran might attack targets outside the United States and its allies with less risk and continues to experiment with cyberattacks against Israeli critical infrastructure. North Korea has not yet developed this kind of capability.

One major failing of catastrophe scenarios is that they discount the robustness and resilience of modern economies. These economies present multiple targets and configurations; they are harder to damage through cyberattack than they look, given the growing (albeit incomplete) attention to cybersecurity; and experience shows that people compensate for damage and quickly repair or rebuild. This was one of the counterintuitive lessons of the Strategic Bombing Survey. Pre-war planning assumed that civilian morale and production would crumple under aerial bombardment. In fact, the opposite occurred. Resistance hardened and production was restored.1

This is a short overview of why catastrophe is unlikely. Several longer CSIS reports go into the reasons in some detail. Past performance may not necessarily predict the future, but after 25 years without a single catastrophic cyberattack, we should invoke the concept cautiously, if at all. Why then, it is raised so often?

#### That’s impossible---safeguards, deterrence, and redundancy.

Caylor 16, LCDR, MA student at Air Command and Staff College. (Matt, 2-1-2016, "The Cyber Threat to Nuclear Deterrence", *War on the Rocks*, https://warontherocks.com/2016/02/the-cyber-threat-to-nuclear-deterrence/)

The perception that cyber threats will ultimately undermine the relevance or effectiveness of nuclear deterrence is flawed in at least three keys areas. First among these is the perception that nuclear weapons or their command and control systems are similar to a heavily defended corporate network. The critical error in this analogy is that there is an expectation of IP-based availability that simply does not exist in the case of American nuclear weapons — they are not online. Even with physical access, the proprietary nature of their control system design and redundancy of the National Command and Control System (NCCS) makes the possibility of successfully implementing an exploit against either a weapon or communications system incredibly remote. Also, whereas the cyber domain is characterized by significant levels of risk due to a combination of bias toward automated safeguards and the liability of single human failures, nuclear weapon safety and surety are predicated on balanced elements of stringent human interaction and control. From two-person integrity in physical inspections and loading, to the rigorous mechanisms and authority required for weapons release, human beings serve as a multi-factor safeguard while retaining the ultimate role to protect the integrity of nuclear deterrence against cyber threats.

To a large degree, the potential vulnerabilities caused by wireless communications and physical intrusions into areas holding nuclear material are already mitigated via secure communications that are not linked to the outside and multiple layers of physical security systems. While there has been a great deal of publicity surrounding the Y-12 break-in of 2012, the truth is that the three people involved never got near any nuclear material or technology.

Without state-level resourcing in the billions of dollars, the technical sophistication required to pursue a Stuxnet-like attack against nuclear weapons is most likely beyond the capability of even the most gifted group of hackers. For all intents, this excludes terrorist organizations and cyber criminals from the field of threats and restricts it to those nations that already possess nuclear weapons. Nuclear-weapon states, however, have the full-spectrum cyber threat capability referenced in the Defense Science Board report and would most likely be influenced by an understanding of the elements of classic nuclear deterrence strategy. In the case of first strike, no cyber weapon could be expected to perform at a rate higher than any conventional anti-nuclear capability (i.e., not 100 percent effective). Therefore, an adversary’s nuclear threat would be perceived to endure, thereby negating and dissuading the effort to use and employ a cyber weapon against an adversary’s nuclear force. Additionally, just as missile defense systems have been historically controversial due to perceived destabilizing effects, it is reasonable to conclude that these nuclear-weapon states would view the attempt to deploy a cyber capability against their nuclear stockpiles from a similar perspective.

Finally, the very existence of nuclear weapons is often enough to alter the risk analysis of an adversary. With virtually no chance of remote or unauthorized detonation (which would be the desired results of a sabotage event), the most probable cyber threat to any nuclear stockpile is that of espionage. Attempted cyber intrusions at the U.S. National Nuclear Security Agency (NNSA) and its efforts to bolster cybersecurity initiatives provide clear evidence that this is already underway. However, theft of design information or even more robust intelligence on the location of stored nuclear weapons cannot eliminate the potential destruction that even a handful of nuclear weapons can bring to an adversary. Knowledge alone, particularly the imperfect knowledge that cyber espionage is likely to offer, is incapable of drastically altering an adversary’s risk calculus. In fact, quite the opposite is true. An adversary with greater understanding of the nuclear capabilities of a rival is forced to consider courses of action to prevent escalation, potentially increasing the credibility of a state’s nuclear deterrence.

Despite the growing sophistication in cyber capabilities and the willingness to use them for espionage or in concert with kinetic attack, the strategic value of nuclear weapons has not been diminished. The insulated architecture combined with a robust and redundant command-and-control system makes the existence of any viable cyber threat of exploitation extremely low. With the list of capable adversaries limited by both funding and motivation, it is highly unlikely that any nation will possess, or even attempt to develop, a cyber weapon sufficient to undermine the credibility of nuclear weapons. In both psychological and physical terms, the threat of the megabyte will never possess the ability to overshadow the destructive force of the megaton. Although the employment of cyberspace for military effect has brought new challenges to the international community, the role of nuclear weapons and their associated deterrence against open and unconstrained global aggression are as relevant now as they were in the Cold War.

#### No terrorist resurgence---COVID checks.

Davis 20, president of Insight Threat Intelligence, an international consultant on counterterrorism and intelligence, a former senior strategic analyst with the Canadian Security Intelligence Service. (Jessica, 4/28/20, "Terrorism During a Pandemic: Assessing the Threat and Balancing the Hype", *Just Security*, https://www.justsecurity.org/69895/terrorism-during-a-pandemic-assessing-the-threat-and-balancing-the-hype/)

The COVID-19 pandemic also creates mitigating conditions for the terrorist threat in much of the world. Around the globe, people are implementing physical distancing measures and, therefore, removing a significant terrorist target: crowds. Physical distancing measures make tactics such as vehicle rammings, stabbings, and bombings far less effective. Without the crowds that usually allow these relatively simple attacks to generate casualties, terrorists may determine that their plans are best perpetrated once physical distancing measures are no longer in place.

While it may be convenient to think of terrorists as relatively omnipotent, my work in counter-terrorism has demonstrated that this is far from the case. Terrorists, like everybody else, can and do get sick, as do their family and friends, creating a burden on care. At the same time, the economic devastation caused by the virus has likely left many would-be terrorists without a source of income. They may be struggling with daily subsistence, meaning devoting additional resources (both in time and money) to attack planning and weapons/component procurements may take a back seat to more immediate needs.

The intense media focus on COVID-19 may also dissuade some would-be terrorists from engaging in attacks during the pandemic. Most terrorists seek recognition for their attacks, with the ultimate goal of sowing fear in a population. This is difficult to do if no one is paying attention to you. A recent attack in France demonstrates how little media attention some attacks are generating. Even for a COVID-19 attack (involving an infected individual), this tactic also does not guarantee media attention. The reality is that anyone we come into contact with could be a virus carrier – determining responsibility would be difficult and far from instantaneous, minimizing one of terrorism’s objectives: instilling fear. This fear would also likely be mitigated by the current environment, which is one where fear is already pervasive due to the global pandemic.